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The Return of the Cad—Anthony Lejeune

NATIONAL REVIEW

ORE AMERICANS BELIEVE IN THIS THAN N THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY. ARE THEY RIGHT?

Ramesh Ponnuru

ONSERVATISM, LIBERTARIANISM, AND ECONOMICS

Michael Prowse, L

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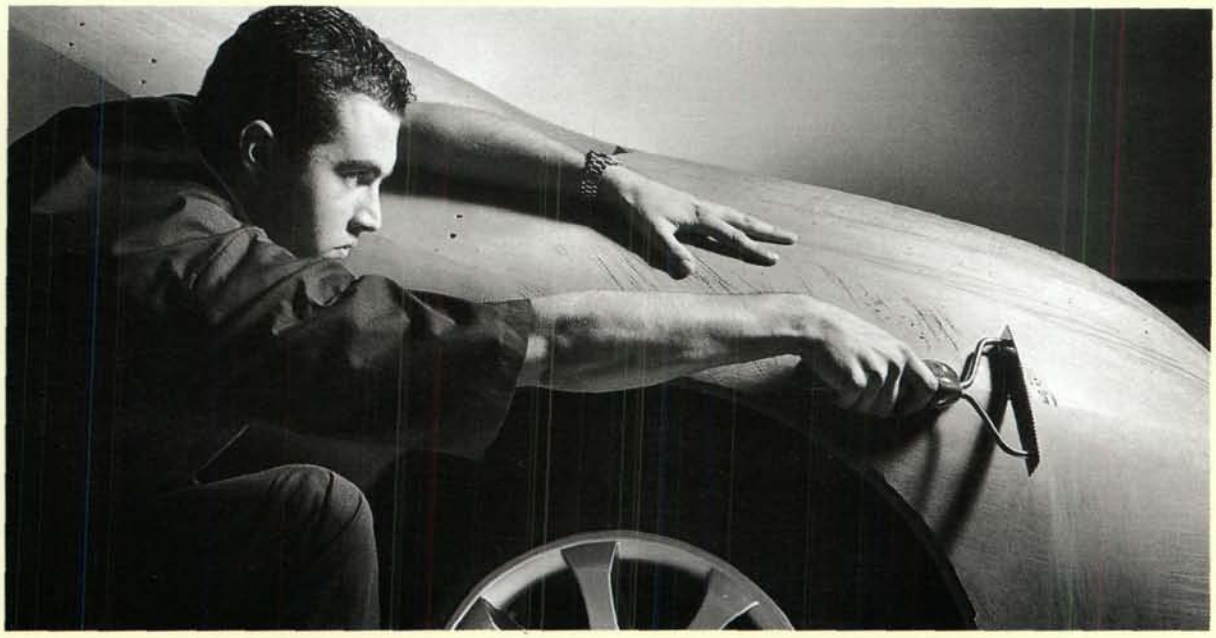

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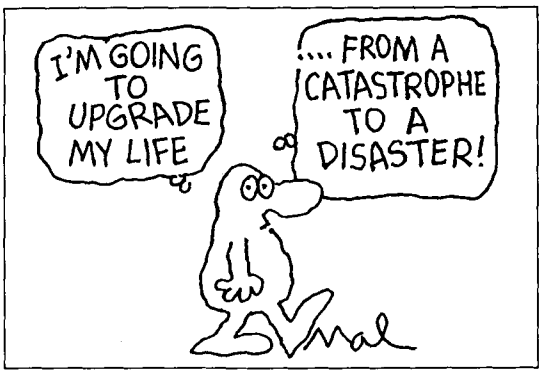

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LETTERS

PC Religion

Richard John Neuhaus's lament about Christless Christmas ["The Empty Crèche," Dec. 31] didn't say the half of it—Christian charity, no doubt. NBC wished its viewers a happy Kwanzaa, but called December 25 "holiday Wednesday." But as Florence King said in the same issue, "Political correctness is now so widespread that you could probably top [her list] with an even more idiotic clipping of your own."

Fr. Neuhaus urges Christians to "observe Christmas Christianly." What ought we Jews to do about Hanukkah as the Jewish Christmas? Fr. Neuhaus doesn't know how good he has it. Some Catholics disregard the magisterium, but they don't claim that disregard as especially Catholic, and few call it a virtue. Liberal Jews dominate American Judaism and not only disregard the Torah, but claim liberalism as an especially Jewish virtue! May the Christians be better Christians, and the Jews better Jews.

Roberto Alazar
Irvine, Calif.

Propaganda?

Sean O'Callaghan's apologia ["The Lying Game," Jan. 27] and John O'Sullivan's editorial missive in the same issue maintain NATIONAL REVIEW's status as a pre-eminent propaganda sheet.

The gravamen of O'Callaghan's diatribe against the Irish republican movement is his repeated assertion that the IRA is engaged in a sectarian war against Protestants. This charge is laughable and undermines the credibility of O'Callaghan's entire case. In fact, the republican movement is rooted in non-sectarianism. Its eighteenth-century founder, Theobald Wolfe Tone, was a Presbyterian. Its leading thinkers such as Gerry Adams have repeatedly pointed out that it is the British who attempted to pit Irish Catholic against Irish Protestant, as they pitted Hindu against Moslem and Jew against Arab in other colonies. From my personal experience of meeting with representatives from all elements of the republican movement over the past two decades, I can state unequivocally that I have never heard even one word of anti-Protestant rhetoric. While there may well be bigoted Irish republicans, they are no more representative of Irish republicanism than Mark Fuhrman is representative of American police officers. Irish republicans are no more anti-Protestant than *NR* is anti-Semitic.

The O'Callaghan–O'Sullivan thesis that the Irish hatred of informers is "incomprehensible" and that there is a "public duty" to inform creates an interesting juxtaposition of ideals. Confronted by British oppression, Gerry Adams looked to George Washington and Nathan Hale, while Messrs. O'Callaghan and O'Sullivan follow Benedict Arnold and Alger Hiss.

In closing, I will answer Mr. O'Sullivan's direct query as to whether I would support a visa for Mr. O'Callaghan. Clearly, O'Callaghan's veracity is suspect. His revelations coincide with being released from a British prison just eight years into his five-hundred-year sentence. Moreover, he claims as his mentor the self-serving hypocrite Conor Cruise O'Brien. Nevertheless, I would certainly support a visa for O'Callaghan because, unlike *NR*, which ignores British atrocities and state terrorism, I believe Americans should see all sides of the Irish issue. That is a search for the truth which all intellectually honest conservatives should endorse.

Rep. Peter T. King (R., N.Y.)
Washington, D.C.

"I never heard even one word of anti-Protestant rhetoric," says Congressman King of his meetings with Irish republicans. Rather than judge those masters of propaganda by their words, Mr. King might be wiser to judge them by their deeds. What about such massacres of Protestants as those at Kingsmill, Darkley, and Teebane? Carried out, of course, when influential Americans were not about. However, I am grateful to Mr. King for a) lending his support to my application for a visa and b) giving me a good laugh by comparing Gerry Adams to George Washington. —SO'C

Case Closed

Richard Brookhiser ["The Open Question," Dec. 31], battling tendentious revisionists, has convincingly absolved Thomas Jefferson of protracted support for the French Revolution and put him back on Mount Rushmore where he belongs. He observes that "great men are not always consistent," though surely great men are consistent on the big issues.

Ernest W. Lefever
Chevy Chase, Md.

Modern Exodus

William Murchison's fine review of Thomas C. Reeves's *The Empty Church* ["Not Empty—Yet," Dec. 31] has one error. The United Methodist Church is losing a little more than one thousand members every week, not ten thousand. Of course, this exodus is still enormous.

We United Methodists have lost 2.5 million members in thirty years. I am not aware of any other church in the history of Christendom that has lost so many souls in so short a period, except possibly the Russian Orthodox after the Bolshevik Revolution, or the Greek Orthodox after the Turks seized Constantinople. But we have no sultans or commissars to blame. Murchison and Reeves are correct that liberal theology and liberal politics are the primary culprits. And they are right that liberals, despite their stranglehold on ecclesiastical power, are still the minority.

As a lifelong Methodist, I can affirm that most who still drag themselves to our churches adhere to the basic Christian beliefs that evangelicals and Roman Catholics share. We do so despite the bizarre assertions of our denominational teaching materials, despite the embarrassing pronouncements of our national church agencies, and despite the too often vacuous sermons that could arise only from today's liberal seminaries.

Mainline Protestant church leaders are indeed "ripe for a surprise call from Headquarters." We can only hope they recognize the Voice when they finally pick up the phone.

Mark Tooley
The Institute on Religion & Democracy
Washington, D.C.

Overpaid

Ed Rubenstein ["Right Data," Dec. 23] notes that the abandonment of the inner cities by business is an effect, not a cause, of urban decay. The real culprit is "a declining pool of willing workers" following the massive Great Society expansion of the welfare state. A Cato Institute study notes that under present law a welfare mother in Hawaii with two children could receive as much as $36,400 a year in assistance, equivalent to $17.50 an hour. The study says welfare exceeds 150 per cent of the poverty level in 21 states; pays more than the national average salary of a secretary in 29 states; and outpays teachers in 9 states and computer programmers in 6 states. In 46 states welfare recipients get the equivalent of $7.16 an hour or more.

Many Americans are unaware that their taxes support a system that provides incentives to ride the wagon instead of pulling it.

Daniel John Sobieski
Chicago, Ill.

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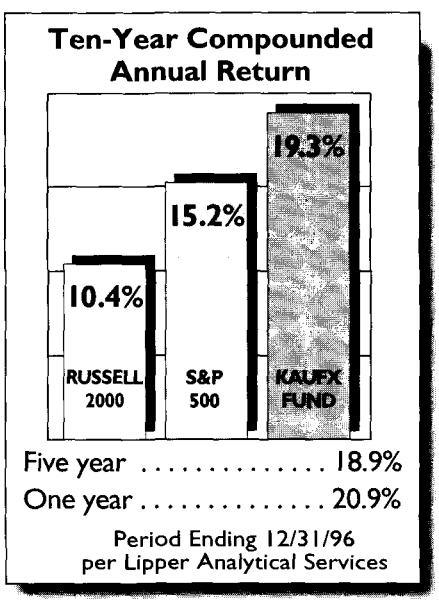

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FROM THE EDITOR

Freeway to Damascus

■ Michael Prowse, who writes on Austrian economics in this issue, is the latest British journalist to have had an ideological conversion during his stint in Washington. Mr. Prowse, who writes a column for the London *Financial Times* (ironically, a stronghold of social-democratic orthodoxy; cf. *Business Week*), describes how America's competitive economy converted him *from* the statist, egalitarian Keynesianism he imbibed in pre-Thatcher British universities and *to* the school of free-market economics that devotes most attention to economic change and entrepreneurship.

Having experienced a dynamic economy, Mr. Prowse found a static intellectual analysis increasingly unreal.

He now returns to a more flexible British economy—the fastest-growing one in Europe—but to an intellectual climate that remains static, egalitarian, and sourly unwilling to draw Mr. Prowse's intellectual conclusions from the success of its own Thatcherite dynamism.

■ Before self-congratulation gets out of hand, however, consider the valedictory remarks of Ambrose Evans-Pritchard of the London *Sunday Telegraph*.

For many years Mr. Evans-Pritchard was almost the sole Washington hand to see the merits of Reaganomics, the folly of high taxes, the truth about the deficit (a manageable problem), etc. He retains faith in America's economic dynamism.

Where he sinks into pessimism is over American politics: "this great country . . . is becoming something very different: a polyethnic federation administered by a single ruling class. Thirty years of mass immigration from non-European countries has disturbed [its] settled character . . . assiduously promoting cultural separatism has done the rest."

So far, America's free economy has borne the cultural radicalism of its political elites. But for how much longer?

■ In recent years, Democrats and the Left have wrapped themselves in the First Amendment whenever something like pornography or flag-burning was at issue. Their latest enthusiasm (shared by *NR*'s John Simon) is for Milos Forman's *The People vs. Larry Flynt*. Free speech is so important, goes its theme, that it must be preserved even for a (sanitized) scumbag like the *Hustler* publisher.

Behind this logic lies a succession of Supreme Court decisions "expanding" First Amendment rights. Protected speech was first held to include obscene writing and pictures, and then interpreted outward to include the wider category of "free expression," including nude dancing, flag-burning, or whatever took the Court's fancy.

To judge by their writings, however, the Founding Fathers had a very restrictive view of "free speech" that did not even include all speech. What they sought to protect was "political speech."

And that is the category of expression that Democrats and the Left (the friends of Flynt) now seek to restrict: independent expenditures which are constitutionally protected from government regulation (a/k/a campaign-finance laws).

You don't believe me? Listen to Rep. Dick Gephardt: "What we have is two important values in direct conflict: freedom of speech and our desire for healthy campaigns in a healthy democracy. You can't have both."

Enjoy the movie, Congressman.

■ Like Rep. Peter King (see "Letters," page 2), several readers argue that the IRA is needed to defend Catholics in Northern Ireland from the British Army and "loyalist" terrorists. Really?

Of the 3,041 people killed in Northern Ireland up to 1993, about two-thirds were killed by the IRA and other republicans. Most were Catholics. Indeed, constitutional nationalist John Hume pointed out that in the twenty years to 1968, republicans had killed more than twice as many Catholics as had the security forces—*and in the ten years 1978–88 more Catholics than the loyalists had.* Would you buy insurance from a company with that record?

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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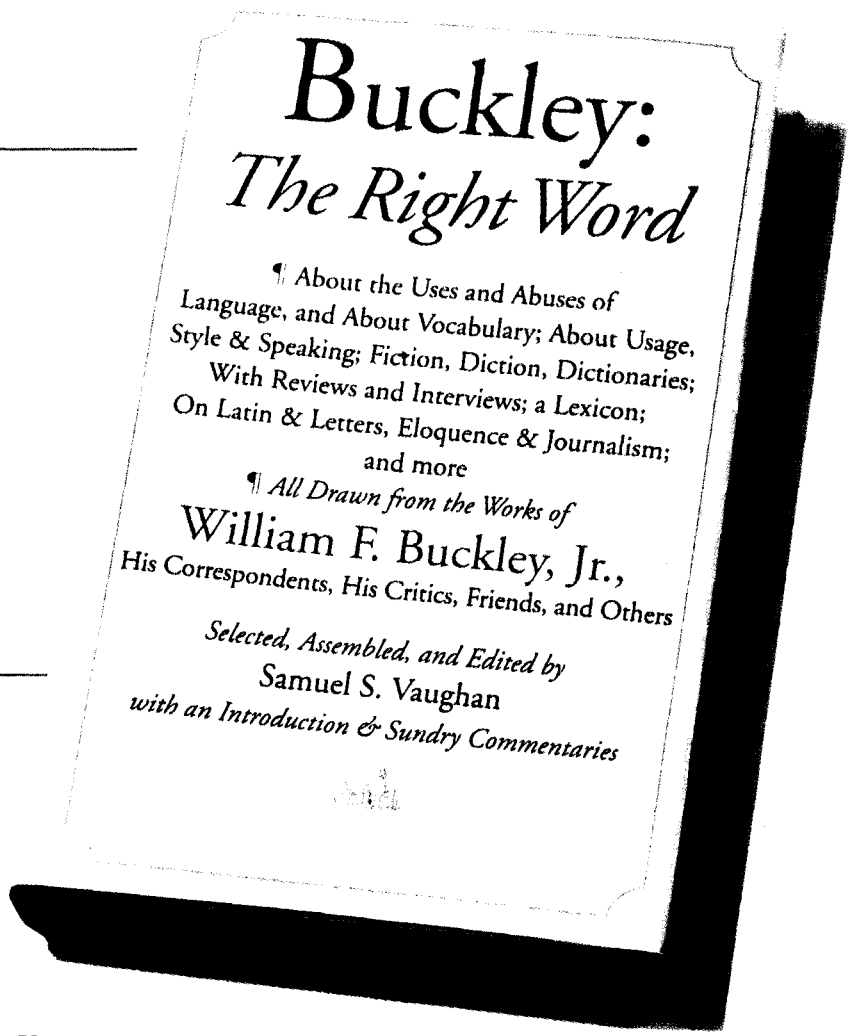
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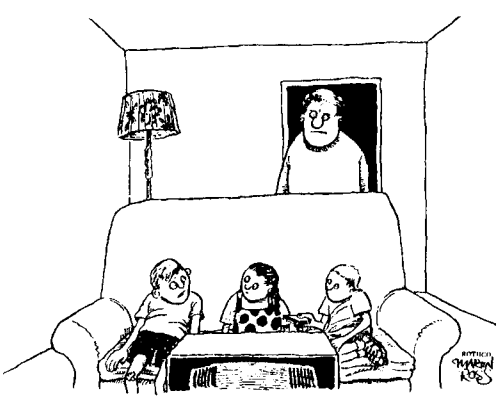
FOR THE RECORD

■ **Amy Isaacs**, national director of very liberal Americans for Democratic Action, tells *The New Republic*, "We're hopeful that in the second term, when he's not accountable to constituents, [**Clinton**] will reach back to his core values, and will come out swinging for what he believes in." . . . **Hillary Clinton** on whether she had the apparently misused database installed in the White House: "I would doubt that I was the person who ordered it." Rep. **David McIntosh** (R., Ind.), chairman of the subcommittee investigating the database, says he will seek subpoena power if necessary. "So," says CBS's **Rita Braver**, "we could be in the middle of one of those fun executive-privilege arguments." . . . During his confirmation hearings as defense secretary, **William Cohen** said he approved of Clinton Administration's go-slow missile-defense policy—which he had criticized as a Republican senator. . . . After nominee for labor secretary, **Alexis Herman**, was alleged to have done illegal political work while on White House staff, **Mike McCurry** said, "I can't believe the majority leader would suggest that she's disqualified from serving as secretary of labor because she attempted to encourage African Americans to participate in the political life of this nation." Majority Leader **Trent Lott** called the remark "totally uncalled for . . . the kind of statement that I'm not going to put up with at the White House." McCurry retreated but did not apologize. . . . House Majority Whip **Tom DeLay** says Democrats are "calling for bi-partisan, but they want us to be bi, while they're partisan." . . . After Speaker **Newt Gingrich**'s $300,000 "reimbursement fee," Rep. **Mark Sanford** (R., S.C.) reflects on his children: "I will not say to them, 'I want you to grow up to be like Bill Clinton or Newt Gingrich.' "

■ Sen. **Bob Kerrey** (D., Neb), positioning himself for possible presidential run in 2000, contradicted previous statements by staying on as chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. He says the party needs to develop "a clear message": "I don't think we won the presidential race because of the superior ideas of the Democratic Party." **Jesse Jackson** and **Bill Bradley** may also run for Democratic nomination. . . . On the Republican side, **Steve Forbes** predicts the successful nominee will run on some form of flat tax: "Unless you're on board on that, you won't be a competitor." *Orlando Sentinel* reports that **Jack Kemp** is "hinting" to party insiders that he would choose **Colin Powell** as a running-mate. *USA Today* president Al Neuharth talks up ex-Sen. **Nancy Landon Kassebaum Baker** (R., Kan.) as a "sleeper" candidate, also says **Ted Turner** may run as independent. . . . Ex-NYC Mayor **David Dinkins** may try to take old job back from GOP's **Rudolph Giuliani**. . . . **Dan Rather** has discovered identity of man who attacked him yelling, "Kenneth, what is the frequency?" in 1986: **William Tager**, in prison for killing an NBC technician outside the *Today* show studios.

■ Notes toward the definition of a culture war: *New York Times* correspondent **Robin Toner**, reviewing a book on modern presidential couples, explains, "**Nancy Reagan**'s adoring gaze at **Ronnie** was as offensive to some Americans as Mrs. Clinton's firm control over her husband's biggest domestic initiative was to others." . . . According to *Geriatrics*, only 39.9 per cent of elderly patients favor legalizing physician-assisted suicide, compared to 59.3 per cent of their relatives. . . . Contributions to South Carolina Republicans drop sharply after Gov. **David Beasley** calls for moving Confederate battle flag from State House dome to Confederate soldiers' monument in front of State House. . . . An overlooked mid '96 Gallup poll revealed the other gender gap: 55 per cent of men knew the attorney general's name, compared to 35 per cent of women; 62 per cent of men, knew the name of the Speaker of the House, compared to 44 per cent of women. . . . Convicted parricide **Lyle Menendez** has married *Playboy* model **Anna Eriksson**—by telephone, since, as *New York Post* deadpans, "no marriages are allowed at L.A.'s Men's Central Jail." . . . Speaking of *N.Y. Post*, former editorial-page editor, and *NR* contributor, **Eric Breindel** has moved to high-up job in **Murdoch** organization, succeeded by *Post* columnist, and *NR* contributor, **Scott McConnell**. . . . Free-market **Competitive Enterprise Institute** joins forces with **Sierra Club**, others, to push for $11.5 billion in corporate-welfare spending cuts.



"I anticipate a coup by an old hardliner and a loss of democratic remote control."

■ **Tom Johnson**, chairman of CNN News Group, says he will go to court to force U.S. Government to allow a five-man news bureau in Havana. . . . The Vatican, apparently with blessing of Pope **John Paul II**, has called on Italian government to ban smoking tobacco as a drug, with the Pontifical Council for the Family denying distinction between "hard" and "soft" drugs. . . . Chinese Pres. **Jiang Zemin** is going to sponsor an international anti-smoking conference in Peking in August. . . . SLORC, the military junta that governs Burma, has sentenced three dozen followers of **Aung San Suu Kyi**, daughter of martyred independence leader **Aung San**, to seven-year prison terms. Aung San Suu Kyi's husband, **Michael Aris**, a British scholar receiving honorary degree from American University, conveyed her call for a U.S. embargo against regime. . . . **Hikaru Matsuda**, spokesman for four thousand doctors, initiated a plan for organ donations from personnel on U.S. military bases in an effort to break Japanese prejudices against transplants. . . . France is "fossilized," says Pres. **Jacques Chirac**, burdened with highest unemployment since World War II and frustrated in efforts to modernize economy. Polls show French most pessimistic people in Europe.

■ Bill Clinton says the White House line on scandals keeps changing because "when you get asked hundreds of questions it's not possible to remember the answer to every one." **Jay Leno**'s retort: "Unless, of course, you're telling the truth and don't have to remember an answer."

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Partnerships, joint ventures, cooperation and alliances are now more than ever important aspects of U.S.-Japan trade. "In one industry after another," reports *Business Week,* "U.S. and Japanese partners are breaking new ground in their level of cooperation."

This is especially true in the semiconductor industry. Long a flashpoint between U.S. and Japanese companies, the escalating cost of R&D and fabrication facilities—now about $1 billion for a single plant—has led to a number of joint ventures and alliances. To cite just two representative examples: Toshiba and Motorola are long-time partners in semiconductor manufacturing, and Fujitsu and AMD are expanding their successful joint venture for developing and producing advanced flash memory chips.

Far from being frozen out of the Japanese market, U.S. auto-parts manufacturers are becoming key suppliers to top Japanese firms—a major reason their sales in Japan exceeded $21 billion last year. TRW, through its parts division, has become a significant player in the Toyota and Nissan auto groups. And GM's Delphi Automotive Systems parts division is a leading supplier ($400 million last year) to Toyota and other Japanese auto companies.

The appeal of burgeoning markets in Asia has led many Japanese and American companies to join forces. Building on their success in Japan, for example, Caterpillar and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries are now targeting Asian markets for construction equipment, and GE has teamed with Mitsui to sell power generation equipment in China and Indonesia.

Does such cooperation mean that the U.S.-Japan business rivalry is over? Hardly. Even when American and Japanese companies cooperate, they still fight it out in the marketplace. But that's a gain for everyone, because it makes companies more competitive, spurs innovation and provides better value and quality to consumers in both countries and around the world.

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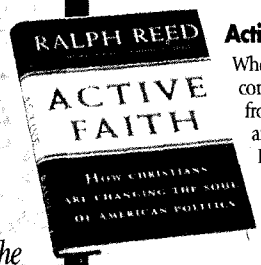
A Country Is Only As Solid As The Foundation On Which It Is Built.

America From A Christian Perspective. Only From the Conservative Book Club.

Almighty God; we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This statue of George Washington at prayer is located at the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge.



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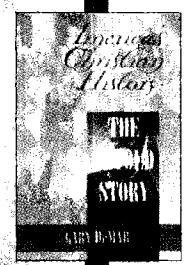

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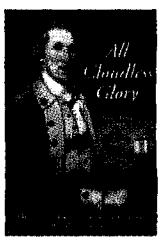

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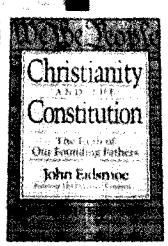

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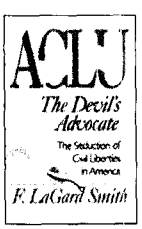

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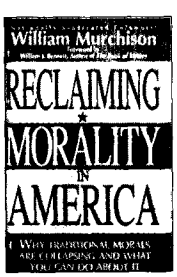

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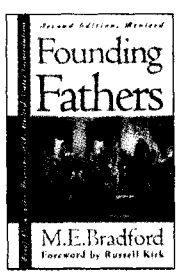

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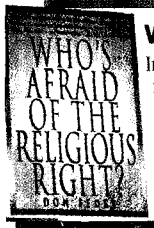

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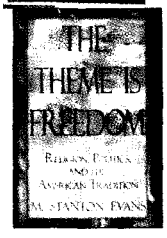

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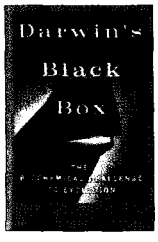

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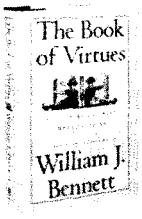

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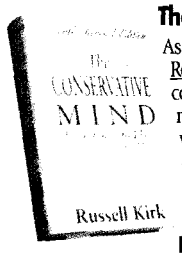

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THE WEEK

■ Libyan strongperson Muammar Qaddafi calls President Clinton a "decent, peace-loving guy," and says he'd like to meet him. That and $50,000 will get him a cup of White House coffee.

■ Trent Lott (R., Miss.) and other Senate Republicans have given President Clinton wide leeway in choosing his Cabinet, as is proper. But in the cases of the nominations of Alexis Herman for labor secretary and of Anthony Lake for director of central intelligence, consent should be withheld. Miss Herman, as head of the White House's Office of Public Liaison, may have been involved in illegal campaign fund-raising; she is definitely, as revealed by Ira Stoll in the *Forward*, a quota-monger. Lake, as national security advisor, misled Congress (and the CIA) about Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia. His expressed doubts about Alger Hiss's guilt do not increase his credibility as a spycatcher. Nor does his professed desire to make "environmental matters" a priority for the CIA. Lake is thoughtful, but he has always been a Sixties liberal, and his entire career shows him to be temperamentally unsuited to heading the CIA. As is sadly typical of Washington these days, his views don't seem to be hurting him as much as his stock transactions. The odds are slightly in favor of both nominees' being confirmed; Mr. Lake because Sen. John McCain (R., Ariz.) and ex-DCI Robert Gates support him, Miss Herman because black women inspire fear and trembling among Beltway Republicans. Defeating them would remind the Clinton Administration that George Mitchell no longer runs the Senate. It might also encourage better appointments for future Supreme Court openings.

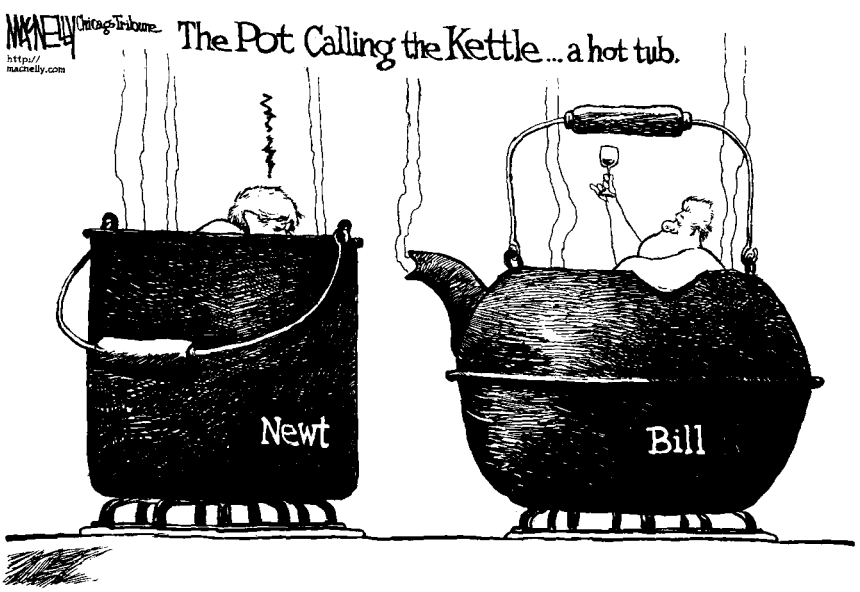
■ Instead, it's shaping up to be a February of defeats for conservatives. Republicans are likely to lose the fight over the Balanced Budget Amendment. Populists will certainly lose on term limits. And pro-lifers (and spending hawks) may well lose a vote on international abortion-funding. Defeat, as Rich Lowry points out elsewhere this issue, can be habit-forming. If Republicans don't rise from their defensive crouch and set an agenda bolder than their current one, they will be unable to block the Democratic agenda of targeted tax credits and regulation. If they do, they will find that victory can be habit-forming too.

■ The White House coffee shop has Capo di Cappuccino and Espresso Influence on special this week, at $75,000, refills free. Regular Medellín Columbian is $20,000, Big House Blend $25,000, Mocha Riady $450,000, and Latte Arms $199,995. A 20 per cent surcharge is required for those who wish not to sit with Al Gore.

■ What a difference a year makes! Last year Washington buzzed with talk of scrapping the entire tax code in favor of a flat tax or a sales tax. This year's hot tax debate centers on whether to apportion the goodies to special groups, such as college students earning at least a B average (provided they do not come from families earning over $100,000), or to cut tax rates on certain transactions across the board and let taxpayers decide what to do with the money. Clinton's capital-gains "cut" would double the amount some homeowners can exempt from tax, while keeping the top tax rate on gains at 28 per cent. Similarly, a $500-per-child tax credit for middle-class families will do nothing for higher-income taxpayers, who, thanks to the 1990 and 1993 tax acts, currently pay nearly 40 cents of each incremental dollar to the government. Even the amount of taxes cut is problematic. Clinton aides are calling it a $98-billion tax-relief plan. But this ignores $80 billion worth of tax increases in the form of obscure accounting changes, loophole closings, and reinstatements of taxes scheduled to expire, including a 10 per cent tax on airline tickets. The President's tax cuts turn out to have a distinguishing characteristic: they are very small.

■ Mr. Clinton vouchsafes that "way, way over 90 per cent" of donations to his campaign were legal. That's, mmmm, fewer than 10 per cent felonies mixed in with the ethical lapses.

■ The people of Hawaii are in revolt. In 1993 the Hawaiian Supreme Court decided that the state's refusal to recognize homosexual marriage violated the state Consti-



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tution's equal-protection clause. The state House has now voted, 44 to 7, to amend the constitution to define "marriage" to mean what everyone but judges knows it means: a union of one man and one woman. The Hawaiian Senate seems likely to follow, thus sending the amendment to the people for final approval. When that happens, probably next year, will the court reject the amendment? (That is what the Colorado Supreme Court did a while back, to an amendment forbidding "gay-rights" laws—i.e., laws conferring special status on homosexuals.) If the legal system produces such a result, Hawaiians may reconsider their petition for statehood. So may we all.

■ Long formal speeches don't serve President Clinton well. Perhaps because he is so much about tactics, there is rarely anything deep or stirring in them. They instead tend to feature wonkish laundry lists like the ten-point education plan unveiled in his State of the Union address, which is a rehash both of President Bush's America 2000 plan and of poll-tested ideas like a tuition tax credit already floated in last year's campaign. Clinton repeated his promise—focus-grouped to razor-sharp precision last fall—to "balance the budget and invest in our people while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment." He also advanced his agenda of micro-liberalism with ideas like allocating $5 billion for school construction over four years. None of this is particularly grand or original, but programmatically it's the only game in town, a point brought home by Rep. J. C. Watts's otherwise fine response. With his definition of character as "doing what's right when nobody's looking," Watts made a nice case for traditional values and their relation to limited government. But the only GOP proposal he even mentioned was the Balanced Budget Amendment, which is doomed to defeat. In a Washington where the President has the initiative, where ideological expectations are radically diminished, and where deals behind closed doors loom, it's what they'll do when we're not looking that should have us worried.

■ The *Los Angeles Times* has continued its aggressive coverage of the Dornan vote-fraud case, turning up what could be as many as another 220 illegal voters in Dornan's narrow 984-vote loss to Loretta Sanchez. Back in December, the *Times* broke a high-profile story revealing 18 illegal voters. For its latest report, the paper cross-checked Orange County voting records with a list of 434 immigrants whom the Hispanic group Hermandad—central to the wrong-doing in the Dornan case—described as still being in the process of applying for citizenship. It turned out that 374 of the names matched those of people already registered to vote. Of those 374 registered voters, 220 actually cast ballots in November—probably illegally. For its yeoman work on the largely ignored, racially charged issue of vote fraud, the *Times* has been rewarded with Hermandad-organized protestors outside its offices waving signs reading: "Deport the *L.A. Times*." This journalistic courage is in marked contrast to the behavior of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, which has taken a pass on the Woody Jenkins case; the paper is apparently unwilling to disturb Mary Landrieu, the new senator from the great state of Early and Often.

His Chiropractor Failed

In China, where our backbone bends
Whenever what we do offends,
One wonders whether Albright's line
Will stiffen Clinton's bungee spine.

—W. H. VON DREELE

■ Jesse Jackson, on the NBA's treatment of Dennis Rodman: "It's one thing to punish a man. It's another to take away his dignity." Too late.

■ President Clinton has proposed extending the Family and Medical Leave Act to compel businesses to give workers 24 hours of unpaid time off each year for obligations like escorting an elderly relative to the doctor, or going to a child's school activities. The original FMLA has already produced administrative headaches for businesses—a 13-page bill was transmogrified into 300 pages of regulations by the Labor Department. The bill was also almost entirely unnecessary. According to a 1991 report by the National Federation of Independent Business, 96 per cent of its members already offered medical leave before the FMLA was passed. And a 1994 study by the Society for Human Resource Management reported that 66 per cent of its members offered *paid* leave, though the law required only unpaid leave. The original act, the President's new proposal, and bills sponsored by Sen. Chris Dodd and Rep. Bill Clay strike a blow against small business. One benefit of working for a small company—which is often unable to match larger firms' salaries—is more flexible working arrangements. When small businesses are straitjacketed by regulation, they are robbed of a major asset. For all its high rhetoric, the Administration's proposal amounts to a favor for Big Business, at the expense of smaller competitors.

■ The headline in the *New York Post* said it all: "Shame of our 'safer' city: Bias crimes are up 27 per cent." Though crime is down in New York, crimes inflected with bias rose—from 437 in 1995 to 555 last year. If those totals don't sound that high for a city of seven million jostling souls, the bias-counters subdivide them. "Anti-disability" bias crimes went through the roof—from zero, to one. When will it be safe to wheel the streets?

■ In his address before the National Abortion and Re-

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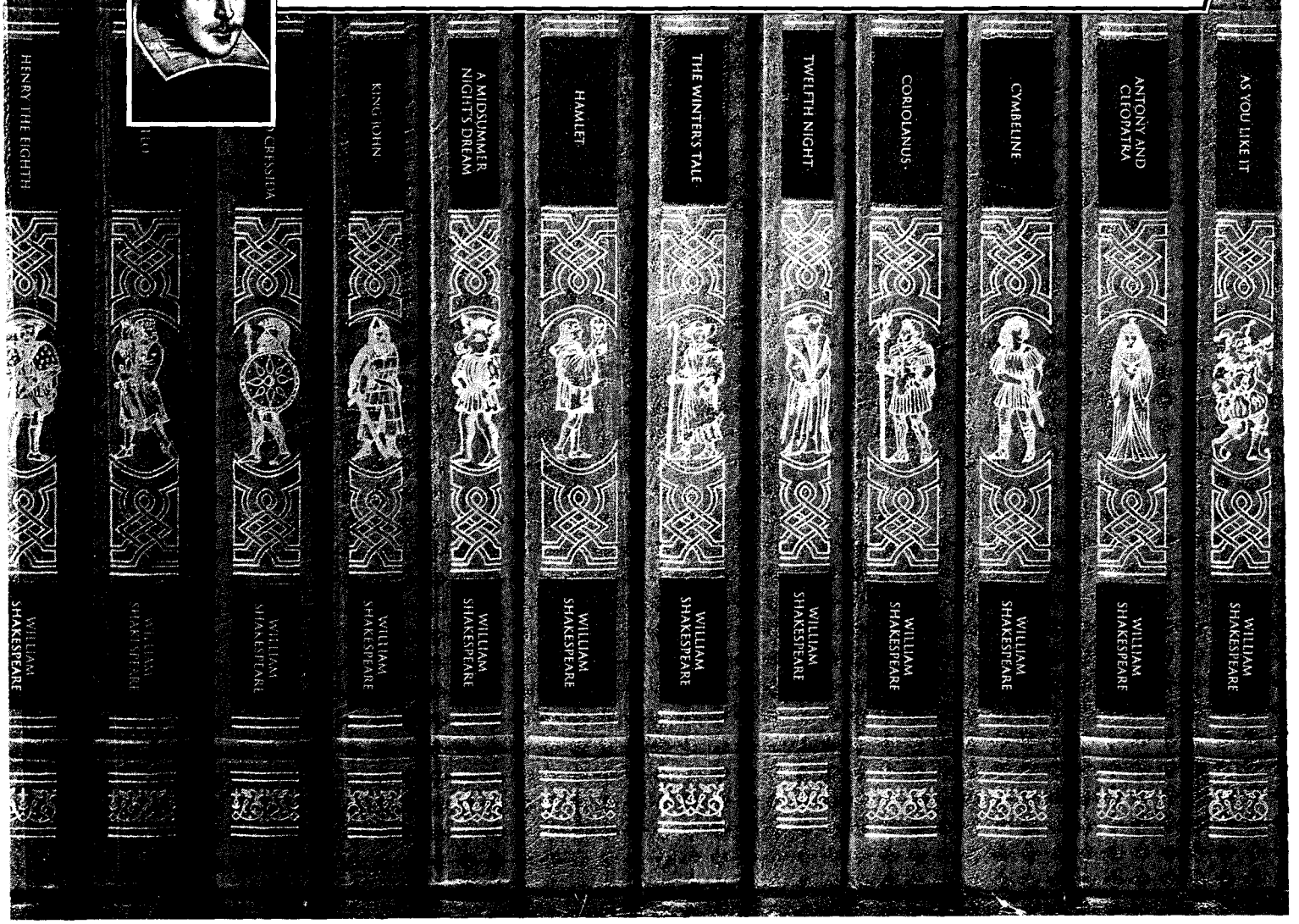

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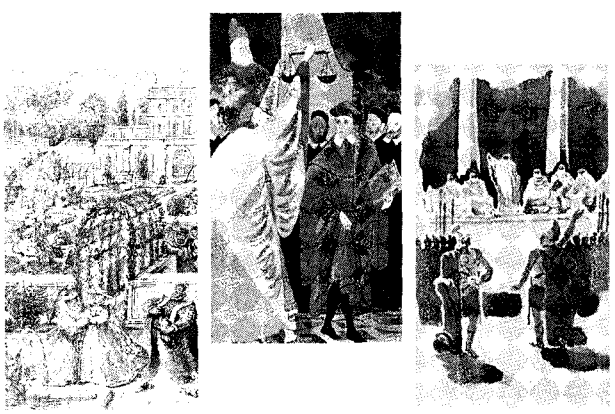

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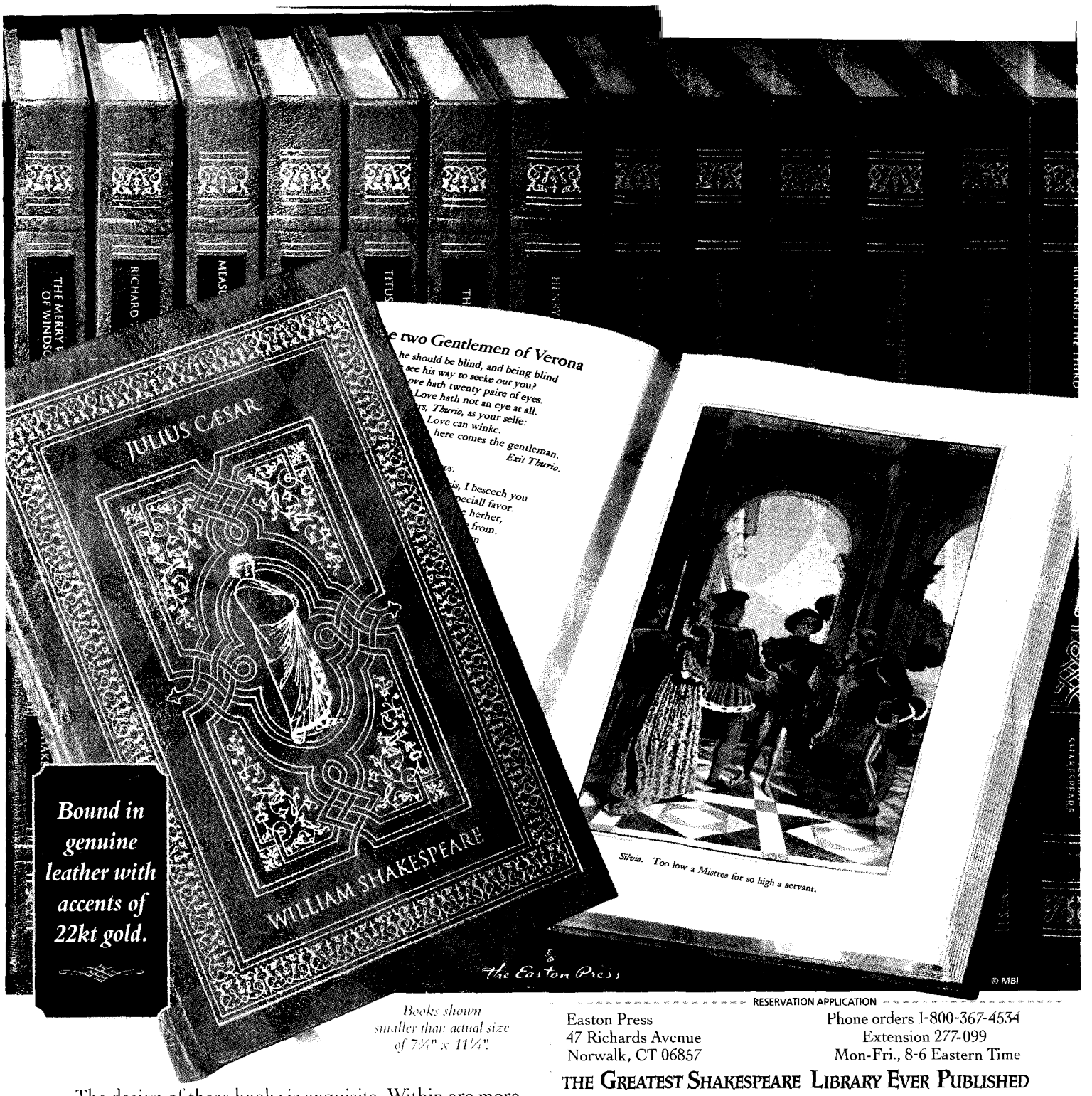
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e two Gentlemen of Verona
he should be blind, and being blind
see his way to seeke out you?
ove hath twenty paire of eyes.
Love hath not an eye at all.
rs, Thurio, as your selfe:
Love can winke.
here comes the gentleman.
Exit Thurio.
Silvia. Too low a Mistres for so high a servant.
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productive Rights Action League, Al Gore said that "exactly four years ago" he met anti-abortion leaders in a search for common ground, only to be rebuffed because a minority of anti-abortionists (read: the Catholic Church) oppose birth control. Douglas Johnson, head of the National Right to Life Committee, says neither he nor anyone he has contacted from more than forty allied organizations ever heard of this alleged meeting: "He must have been meeting with some Buddhist monks and mistakenly thought that they were pro-life leaders." What's going on here? First, Gore is positioning himself for the Democratic primaries of 2000. Party activists remember that Gore voted against abortion 84 per cent of the time when he represented a conservative district in the House, even if NARAL head Kate Michelman testifies that his views have "evolved." Second, Gore is preparing the ground for an upcoming legislative fight over international "family planning" funding. Pro-lifers want to restore the Reaganite policy of providing funding only for organizations that don't perform abortions and don't lobby to liberalize abortion laws in nations that protect the unborn. The issue is not birth control, on which groups like the NLRC take no position, but the imperialist designs of the abortion lobby. In the meantime, if common ground is what Gore is after, banning partial-birth abortion has bi-partisan support.

■ The School Choice Scholarships Foundation (*NR*'s Dusty Rhodes is a member of the founding group) has offered one thousand scholarships of $1,400 each to children in New York City's worst public schools. "One of the great tragedies in New York City today is that so many children don't have a fighting chance of getting a good education," said foundation president Bruce Kovner. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, on hand for the announcement, hailed it as "a day in which we put the children of New York City ahead of systems, bureaucracies, [and] defending politics." The public-spiritedness of the School Choice Scholarships Foundation can teach the public sector.

Two Peas, Same Pod

Like Tweedledee when Tweedledum
Did something that left Alice numb
And tried to look the other way,
Al Gore, whose moves and mien convey
The sense of someone on the make,
Will hiss at Tipper, "For God's sake!"
Whenever Bill's proboscis grows
As lengthy as Pinocchio's.

—W. H. VON DREELE

■ An editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, "Federal Foolishness and Marijuana," has labeled the policy of forbidding doctors to prescribe pot to patients who need it "misguided, heavy-handed, and inhumane." In the wake of California's Proposition 215, the Federal Government announced that the National Academy of Sciences would conduct a review of existing research on the medical efficacy of marijuana. Itb will have less to review than it otherwise might, because the Federal Government has been *obstructing* research into medical marijuana for years. As Jacob Sullum argues in the January *Reason*, the government also has a chilling effect on the prescription of legal pain-relievers: "attracting the attention of state regulators . . . could mean anything from inconvenience and embarrassment to loss of [doctors'] licenses and livelihoods." In passing, Sullum gives social conservatives cause to regret state-sponsored "opiophobia": Dr. Kathleen Foley, chief of pain service at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, says: "Those asking for assisted suicide almost always change their mind once we have their pain under control." Medicine should be about relieving pain, not passing it on from Washington.

■ The Sen. Christopher J. Dodd National Media Truthwatch, launched in these pages, rolls along. First it was picked up by the *Washington Times*, whence it was picked up and read on the air by G. Gordon Liddy. According to the White House media food chain, the item has only to be cleared by Ambrose Evans-Pritchard in London before it will filter down to the *New York Times*, the newsweeklies, network TV, and other bottom feeders. Then *everybody* will be watching and waiting for Sen. Dodd to tell the truth "again."

Judging the Judges

THE sociologist Peter Berger once remarked on "the remarkable spectacle of these nine characters, swishing around in priestly robes in a building resembling a Greek temple and engaged in the endless exegesis of a sacred text—and then having the chutzpah of insisting that there is no establishment of religion in America." American political culture, as currently constituted, rests on this semi-sacralized understanding of the courts, and especially the Supreme Court. Conservatives would do well to keep this in mind as they talk of "taking on the courts" and ending their usurpation of democracy. Pro-tecting the Constitution from the courts is indeed a crucial project, but it will not succeed unless the courts' mystique is challenged.

Most conservatives now realize that merely attempting to block activist judicial nominees and appoint sound ones will not suffice. But many have absorbed the notion of judicial supremacy from the larger political culture; they have grown accustomed to regarding the Supreme

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Court as the ultimate guarantor of individual rights. That understanding will undermine any serious challenge to the abuse of judicial review. If, for example, Congress exercised its constitutional power (under Article III, Section 2) to eliminate the court's jurisdiction over, say, term limits, even conservatives would worry that this structural check on the courts could itself be abused and correct court decisions could be overturned by a majority vote.

Those fears are well founded. *Any* power can be abused, as conservatives have always insisted. But it is also true that the only ultimate protection for our rights is a general public commitment to them—a commitment eroded when the task of protection is entrusted solely to one branch of government. Many legislators don't worry about the constitutional implications of their proposals, despite their oaths of office, because they rely on the courts to sort it out. Judicial supremacy is neither in the Constitution's text nor in the Founders' understanding of it. It has not proved institutionally compatible with self-rule. Nor is it even a reliable ally of the individual rights we actually possess: consider the right to life.

The imperial judiciary is a structural problem requiring structural solutions. Whether we like it or not, the courts are forcing us to apply the first principles of the American Founding to an out-of-control branch of government.

The Huang Crowd

THE Clinton Administration's fundraising scandal has achieved the complexity of all the first-term scandals rolled into one: John Huang's top-secret clearance while in the employ of the Lippo Group; Lippo's payments to disgraced Clinton Administration official Webster Hubbell; the renting out of the Lincoln bedroom; the White House coffee klatches organized by the DNC; the White House database that may have been tapped by the DNC for fundraising. It is as if the Administration believes that if corruption is too extensive to track, it will get a free ride: absolution by sensory overload. And so far it has worked.

But the latest round of scandal has an easy-to-understand bottom line: the selling of Administration policy. That is the aroma that hangs over the coffee meeting, sponsored by the Democratic Party, of some of the nation's most powerful bankers, the President, and the comptroller of the currency. In return for bankers' contributions, did the Administration lighten the banks' load in the savings-and-loan bailout? Meanwhile, did rainmaker Huang influence Administration trade policy in ways favorable to his Asian patrons? If the Administration's policy-making on immigration is any indication—after being plied with Asian contributions, it reversed its opposition to the automatic right of immigrants to bring in adult siblings—the answers are quite conceivably "yes."

This gives the fund-raising scandal its crippling potential. But all the scandals reflect the ethics of the man at the top. One of the hallmarks of the Clinton Administration is that *no one* tells the truth: Clinton confidant Bruce Lindsey has been caught in two more untruths recently; the "spotless" Vice President has produced rolling acknowledgments of his "misstatement" when he denied knowing a fundraiser at a Buddhist temple was a fundraiser; even Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin is making the dubious claim that he didn't see DNC Chairman Don Fowler at the coffee meeting when all of two dozen people were in the room.

Which gives the lie to the absurd notion that the fundraising scandal is a non-partisan affair, demonstrating the need for new campaign-finance laws. John Huang wasn't organizing RNC fund raisers, and, as Sen. Mitch McConnell never tires of pointing out, the Clinton Administration was violating laws *already* on the books. With the media now in hot pursuit, the Administration may finally have its date with accountability.

Uninviting

MARIANNE Gingrich, the wife of the Speaker, was accompanied on the balcony for the State of the Union address by the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Jackson, though convivial in private, is not known to be a close friend of the Gingriches, and recently these seating arrangements have become a device for transmitting political messages too delicate for words. Not long ago, Mrs. Clinton was sitting cheek by jowl with Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan—a wink to the bond market that the Administration was secretly sound.

Mrs. Gingrich's companion, together with the selection of Rep. J. C. Watts—a rising conservative star who is nevertheless nervous of eradicating race and gender preferences in the present political climate—to respond to the President, looks like a signal that the GOP won't be raising powerful but contentious issues such as racial preferences, multiculturalism, bilingualism, right-to-work, or immigration any time soon. It's as if the Speaker, having

A Star Is Born

They're buying season tickets
To see Fred Thompson in
A vehicle that's loaded
With sleaze and sex and sin.
Road notices are boffo
And Tinseltown's impressed.
Al Gore keeps looking backward.
George Bush appears depressed.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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won his election by appealing to Republicans and conservatives, now seeks to restore his respectability in the wider of world of Washington and the media.

The trouble with GOP outreach to minorities, of course, is not that the idea is bad in principle—it's good—but that Republican bigshots can't tell the difference between a black and a liberal. Watts, who *can* tell the difference, has described Jackson, harshly but accurately, as one of those "race-baiting poverty pimps" who seek to keep black Americans on the liberal Democratic plantation. By associating themselves with Jackson, Republicans will merely persuade voters that they admit the truth of his accusations of racism. And, of course, it will dispirit and undermine those black and Hispanic conservatives who oppose Jackson's damaging message of political clienthood and who offer the only real hope of Republican gains in minority communities.

Most are hostile to racial preferences. A marriage needs to be arranged between *them* and those Republicans who shrink nervously from anything that smacks of racial controversy. Ward Connerly, who led the anti-quota campaign to victory in California, would have made a fitting companion for Mrs. Gingrich—and that point.

Slight Expectations

SINCE signing the welfare bill six months ago, President Clinton has repeatedly said he intends to reform the reform by increasing spending and restoring welfare eligibility to non-citizens, and what else would you expect? You might expect more, however, from Republican governors.

The number of non-citizens on welfare programs has more than quadrupled in the past ten years, not because there has been an epidemic of hard-working immigrants hit by buses, but because (as Norman Matloff explained in *NR*, Feb. 21, 1994) older immigrants increasingly come to the United States *intending* to retire on welfare. If the trend of the last ten years continues, these immigrant retirement programs will cost taxpayers $324 billion over the next decade as America becomes the free lunch (and breakfast and dinner) capital of the world.

Nevertheless, prominent GOP governors have joined with the President in defending the indefensible. Gov. George Pataki of New York made a public call to restore eligibility to elderly non-citizens; the staff of Texas Gov. George W. Bush worked to the same end behind the scenes. The new law already permits states to cover nursing-home costs by extending Medicaid eligibility to elderly non-citizens, and federal welfare block-grant money is available to assist them. But Pataki and Bush fought to restore eligibility for Supplemental Security Income and food stamps—both fully funded by the Federal Government. The welfare twins are free to ask their state's taxpayers to pick up the bills for non-citizens. Why should they pass the costs on to the rest of the country?

All the states are currently enjoying what the *New York Times* calls a "windfall" from the dramatic reductions of the welfare rolls. Nationwide the welfare caseload is down 15 per cent in the last two years, with far larger reductions in some states. Thanks to Gov. Tommy Thompson, Wisconsin's welfare rolls are down by 34 per cent. Unlike most Republican governors, Thompson controls his welfare bureaucrats, who accordingly dissuade welfare applications by upholding serious work requirements. Most welfare bureaucrats in other states seek to sabotage them.

If Pataki and Bush want to make an impact, they should follow Thompson rather than Clinton. Wisconsin shows that if people are made to work in return for welfare, they don't want it any more. That goes for foreigners too.

On Your Toes

DICK Morris, the toast of tabloid journalism, has written a book, *Behind the Oval Office: Winning the Presidency in the Nineties* (Random House, $25.95), that is getting the full celebrity treatment. Notwithstanding that, *NR* has found some interesting stuff in it. For example:

—*Morris on Republican moderates:* " '[They] won't stand up for you,' I said to a surprised President; 'they are usually the guys with character defects. . . . They're the guys who are usually too rich or too drunk to be taken seriously—guys like [Bob] Packwood [R., Ore.—destroyed by sexual-harassment charges]. Nobody takes them seriously. They always cave . . .' " (p. 75).

—*Morris on immigration politics:* "Anxious to cope with national concern on illegal aliens, the President wanted to increase deportations, so I proposed that we urge states to deny illegal aliens driver's licenses. Since our most frequent police contact is on the highways, I believed this would be an easy way to identify illegals: if people found to be driving without a license were citizens or legal immigrants, they would be ticketed; if they were illegal, they could be sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service—the INS—for deportation. But the INS killed this idea by saying that it didn't want to know of any more illegals since it couldn't deport those it already knew about—an odd response" (p. 123).

—*Morris on What Might Have Been:* "Had I been running Dole's campaign, I would have said, 'President Clinton did a fine job of helping to get our economy in order. He did well to set us toward a balanced budget. But now we must turn to the new issues, the values issues. Then I'd have focused on a host of issues that the President was afraid to touch or that his interest-group support wouldn't let him touch—ending teacher tenure, school choice, school prayer, an end to school busing, the balanced-budget amendment, a moratorium on immigration, passage of a federal right-to-work law, a ban on porn on the Internet' " (p. 272).

—*Morris on his next client(?):* "Forbes might have done

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better if he had kept his wits about him . . . He just withdrew. . . . Dole's early heavy spending had brought him very near the caps on pre-convention spending set by federal law. This left him with little ability to compete with a strong Forbes media blitz in these big states with so many delegates . . . Forbes would have gone to San Diego with a large bloc of delegates. Not a majority, but a lot. When Dole faltered, Forbes could have mounted an effort to force him to step aside, citing his ineffectual candidacy . . . [He] might have found it possible to cream off enough nervous Dole delegates to win . . ." (p. 275–6).

—*Morris on Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott:* "Basically a mainstream politician who happens to come from a conservative Southern state" (p. 76). Trent, say it ain't so.

A Very British Murder

THE Reith lectures, named after the austere Scots founder of the British Broadcasting Corporation, are supposed to be a yearly jewel in its intellectual crown. The first were given by the philosopher Bertrand Russell. But lately they have grown more and more politically correct. What a triumph, then, this year to come up with Patricia Williams, a militant black feminist from Columbia University, talking about a subject which liberals love—unadmitted racial prejudice.

How was Miss Williams chosen, since almost no one in Britain had heard of her? Apparently producers in the Arts, Science, and Feature departments were asked to suggest names. "I suppose it's a reflection of the producers' values," said one of them afterward.

So she arrived the other day in London. The vultures of the British press were shown her still unrecorded scripts and, rocking with hilarity, published some barely comprehensible extracts. She was then teased on a BBC talk show and reduced to stammering inarticulately. After which, high-powered newspaper interviewers descended on her. "I am shocked," she moaned. "I'm not used to this form of debate." She held her head in her hands.

The man from the *Sunday Times* was quite sympathetic. "You look exhausted," he said.

The man from the *Daily Telegraph* also found his chivalrous instincts aroused. But then he read the first of her lectures, and it was like one of those "dreams when you are running in treacle." A sample: "What a world it would be if we could all wake up and see all of ourselves reflected in the world, not merely in a territorial sense, but with a kind of non-exclusive entitlement that grants not so much possessions as investments."

When he struggled to interpret this, she was saddened by what she called his "nuts and bolts" approach. "I tried to say it rather poetically, I thought," she responded.

"Only the Americans," he mused later, "could reward this kind of mumbo-jumbo with a professorship; only the BBC could give her an important series of lectures."

Her own impregnable conclusions are, of course, rather different: "These attacks are another form of racial stereotypes. Perfect. I'm black. I'm a woman." Poor Miss Williams! Thoughtless BBC! Heartless Brits!

Colin Welch, RIP

COLIN WELCH, who has died in England aged 72, was an irresistibly readable journalist, a warmhearted wit, and a conservative thinker who descended into the depths of depression to emerge with glittering insights and unforgettable jokes. No one who began a piece by Colin Welch ever failed to finish it. He was a welcome interpreter of even the worst of times.

Yet because Colin spent most of his life in Fleet Street as an editorial writer, some of his finest writing was anon-

The Week in Verse

A breathless world the *President* attends
As to the *House's* lectern he ascends;
The *Union's* state he'll solemnly assay—
That too, but what's the verdict on *O.J.?*
We laughed, we cried, he'll pay for his *faux pas*!
In *Washington*? Oh, same *Utopia*.
"Big Government" was ended there last year;
Now lots of little government is here,
To right each wrong, each error to rebut,
And promise all we want—without a cut!
(If someone out of sight makes some rescissions,
It's *Bill* who talks so well of "tough decisions.")
More family leave? Why yes, and no mistake
(Though *his* time off comes at the coffee break).

Bi-partisan our *President's* become
To get a jump on the *Millennium*,
And if we'll overlook his little scams,
He'll have the lions lyin' with the lambs!
What though poor *Hubbell* took *Riady* gold?
Or *Rubin's* time or *Ludwig's* place was sold?
Or money-raising grew so commonplace
That donors filled the *White House* database
(Which someone, most emphatically not
The missus, ordered—unless she forgot)?
What though the *GOP* sought to upbraid
The sale of influence—Mistakes were made!
As *Thompson* sifts, along with his Committee,
The litter from that *Democratic* kitty,
And even Media int'rest grows more warm,
Now *Clinton* thinks it's time that *we* reform.
He'd draw the rules more tightly for *both* sides—
And o'er another fund-raiser presides!

But *Hill'ry* goes to sit on *Rosie's* couch
And feeds more *White House* trash to *Oscar Grouch*,
And laughs and sings and otherwise makes nice
And dreams of what she'd "nuke"—besides the mice.

—JUVENAL

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ymous, and he was less celebrated than he deserved to be. But as deputy editor of the London *Daily Telegraph* for almost twenty years, he was the mind and imagination of a great paper. He recruited a galaxy of talent for its arts and politics coverage. He initiated the "Peter Simple" column, a mixture of conservative comment, satire, and fantasy inhabited by such creatures as Dr. Spacely-Trellis, the go-ahead Bishop of Bevindon (author of *God the Humanist*). And twenty years before Mrs. Thatcher entered office, he had made the *Telegraph*'s op-ed page a daily manifesto for that mixture of social conservatism and classical liberalism that was later named Thatcherism.

With such opinions, Colin was naturally an admirer of America. He fought its cause wholeheartedly throughout the Cold War. And he was a conduit through which American conservative and libertarian ideas made their way into British debate. To American readers of *Chief Executive* magazine, which he edited in the early Eighties, NATIONAL REVIEW, *The American Spectator*, and *Encounter*, he was known through articles that were superbly entertaining, full of subtle wisdom—but sadly few in number.

It was not, however, politics which made him pro-American, but Americans. He delighted in the company of friends like Bill and Pat Buckley, Irving and Bea Kristol, and Bob Tyrrell, whom he would have in stitches with his mimicry and flights of fantastical humor. Yet he was hardly less fond of the American tourists whom he met in Fleet Street pubs and with whom he would engage in long (not always sober) conversations, delightedly bringing some new example of Stateside slang or Yankee shrewdness back to the *Telegraph* office.

Colin once said that a journalist's ideal epitaph would read: "Always consistent, never predictable." The bohemian intellectual who thought the middle class knew best, the Tory anarchist who loved the splendor of order, the brilliant stylist who deeply disliked the *chic* could certainly claim that—and much more. His wife, Sybil, his children, and his legions of friends on both sides of the Atlantic mourn a great loss and remember much laughter.

—JO'S

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Numero Uno—

Having read your column on Gingrich, I am minded to ask, what in the hell is a regularly scheduled tricoteuse? Or an irregularly scheduled tricoteuse?

Oh, Bill . . .

Blessings upon you,
Numero Dos

Mr. James Jackson Kilpatrick
Charleston, S.C.

Dear Sir:

Miss Carlson appears on *Capital Gang* every other week. That makes her "regularly scheduled," correct? She takes vapulatory pleasure from the pain & torment caused to the bourgeoisie, which makes her—in the word used by Charles Dickens to describe the sadists who surrounded the guillotine and clucked out their pleasure as they did their knitting—a tricoteuse. Right? Advise. Cordially,

#1

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

When we learn Oriental martial arts, our beloved master teaches the difference in the ways of the Tiger and the Dragon. The Tiger is strong, and lives by strength alone. Strength is, of course, desirable, and the young revel in their youthful strength. They are Tigers.

As we grow older, our youthful strength fades, but we gain wisdom through experience. The martial artist transcends the Tiger within him and learns the ways of the Dragon, whose claw holds the pearl of wisdom. The Dragon is mythical, a human construct, the summation of knowledge. The martial artist thus embraces the wisdom of his art and goes beyond mere strength.

You with me?

A new beast is about in the land, back after some years of absence. The eggs have hatched. He swims quietly in White Waters. He is the Watergator. Woe to those who have waded through the White Waters.

I'm not quite sure what he holds in his claw, what pearls of wisdom. How can we help?

Regards,
Daniel Starr
New Haven, Conn.

Dear Mr. Starr: I don't really know exactly what it is you are saying, but I love the way you do it. Is this deconstruction, or am I missing something? Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Bill:

Concerning my endorsement of Samuel Tanenhaus's book *Whittaker Chambers*, you should not be in any doubt: the research and writing are excellent, but I was particularly enchanted by the discovery that Chambers was a voice on behalf of *The Affluent Society* and other Galbraith writing in the editorial precincts of NATIONAL REVIEW. How good he was in his advanced years!

I take it from your letter that I should close down on endorsements for a while. I had thought of giving you an endorsement for your recent book, *Buckley: The Right Word*. It would have been, "Everybody knows that William Buckley is a master of words; it is only the use to which he puts them that restrains one's enthusiasm."

Yours faithfully,
Ken
[John Kenneth Galbraith]
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Ken: No riposte. On this one, you win. A deep bow. Ever,
Bill

—WFB

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CAPITAL SCENE

Dysfunctional Republicans

RICH LOWRY

Jeff MacNelly

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEN. Fred Thompson's Governmental Affairs Committee is charged with investigating the DNC/Asian fundraising scandal, which is supposed to be an enormous Democratic vulnerability—but you'd never guess it from Democrats' and Republicans' respective behavior. At the end of January Democrats turned what is typically a pro-forma committee organizational session into a street fight on the ground-rules of the investigation. They demanded that the scope of the investigation be broadened to include GOP organizations, and won Republican agreement. They demanded procedural safeguards for themselves, and got them. They forced a party-line vote on the committee's budget (Republicans voted for $6.5 million, Democrats $1.8 million), and now threaten a filibuster on the Senate floor if Republicans dare stick to their number.

This is chutzpah of the highest order. "The Democrats are so incredibly brazen about hardballing us on an issue they are so clearly vulnerable on," says one incredulous GOP Senate aide. "I guess in their opinion we're just so susceptible to blackmail that they think as soon as they scream and yell and distort the facts we'll run away." It's not a bad assumption. Only two Republicans, Thompson and Thad Cochran (Miss.), even bothered to show up for all five hours of the organizational meeting over the course of two days. In contrast, all seven committee Democrats were on hand the first day, and most were there for the second day as well.

What's more, committee Democrats are led by John Glenn (D., Ohio), who was entangled in the Keating Five scandal in the 1980s but still feels comfortable covering for the Clinton Administration on an ethics investigation. Meanwhile, Sen. John McCain (R., Ariz.), also caught up in the Keating Five scandal if only incidentally, still seeks media redemption through a "bipartisan" campaign-finance-reform bill.

What gives? Why are Republicans so easy to push around, so defensive, so concerned about being "fair" while Democrats wield partisan cudgels? "If I were a psychologist," says the Senate aide, "I'd probably say that Republicans by nature were all dressed by their mothers until they went away to college."

There is indeed something deep-rooted about Republicans' tendency toward defensiveness and timidity, which has emerged with new force on Capitol Hill over the last year. The GOP has been dubbed the stupid party, but that's true only insofar as it reflects a deeper problem: the GOP is the party of shame. Not in the way Newt Gingrich and Colin Powell use the word, to mean social disapproval for transgressions, but in the sense in which psychologists speak of it, as a gnawing feeling of inadequacy and worthlessness, beyond guilt for any specific act. It's a quietly destructive emotion. Abused children feel it. So, apparently, do Republicans.

Recently, of course, there has been good reason for Republicans, still not recovered from last year's government shutdowns, to feel less than confident. Says one longtime GOP House aide: "I think the fact that things went from being great to being crummy without Republicans' knowing or understanding how that transformation occurred makes them feel very threatened and insecure." It's one of the reasons Senate Republicans are re-authorizing the feminist-inspired Violence Against Women Act in their crime bill and including $400 million in new adult-literacy spending in their education bill. "On item after item," a Senate aide says of proposed spending cuts, "when you bring them up people say, 'You can't do that, Clinton vetoed that last year.'"

This only represents the return with a vengeance of a traditional Republican attitude. Richard Brookhiser captured it in the 1980s when he wrote of Republicans that in their hearts they know they're wrong. Says one former RNC official: "There are an awful lot of Republicans who don't think a majority of Americans agree with us on our issues." Why? Perhaps the foremost reason is a constant barrage of negative press coverage. Insofar as the mainstream media are the most significant shapers of public opinion, and are inclined to blame the GOP for everything from homelessness to the alleged destruction of the ozone layer, it's natural that Republicans should feel embattled.

And it's not just the media that provide negative reinforcement. Explains one Washington observer: "[Among Republican politicians] you've got people who come disproportionately from the upper middle class or the upper class, and the people they've been around for much of their career and pre-career [are] generally liberal. It's not that they're apologetic toward the general public, they're apologetic toward their peers." Or at least toward the "better"

There is something deep-rooted in the tendency toward timidity in Republicans.

Mr. Lowry is NR's national political reporter.

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people whom they would like to have as their peers once they arrive in Washington.

"The most powerful drug in this profession," says one Senate leadership aide, "is the lust for sophistication." That's why support for school prayer, on which some 70 per cent of the public agrees, can seem a minority position in Washington: because at Kay Graham's book party it distinctly *is* a minority position. It's not likely to be too popular among big donors with their inlaid marble floors and trophy wives, either. And Washington professionals have little use for it. One social conservative who joined a top D.C. lobbying/PR firm in the wake of the 1994 election says when he first arrived, "I was just sort of a zoo creature: 'Let's see if he drools.'"

Consider Dan Quayle's criticism of *Murphy Brown* in 1992. Quayle was making a point that was self-evidently true (two-parent families are best) but that was still made to look utterly idiotic. Quayle not only was subjected to a withering round of press criticism, he was ridiculed by our culture's trend-setters, the fashionable elite. The Emmys in 1992 were devoted almost entirely to Quayle jokes. No wonder the first instinct of the Bush Administration was to retreat. It was outgunned.

The country's opinion-makers and pop-cultural elite don't outnumber everyone else, they just have more social weight; they define the rules, and Republicans are invariably outside them. It's like showing up for the first day of high school with Wrangler jeans when everyone in the "in" crowd is wearing Levis—a subtle but indelible marker that you don't belong. Only it's not the fashion sense of Republicans that is thrown into question, but their moral sense. Since FDR, Republicans have been attacked for hating the poor. If that stain has faded some, it has not yet been entirely removed, and another has been added: hating women and minorities.

The constant questioning gives Republicans guilty consciences. "When they said we were cutting school lunches," explains pollster Kellyanne Fitzpatrick, "we said, 'Nu-uh,' then checked the language of the bill to make sure that it wasn't in there." This is especially true of issues of race. "Somewhere in their unconscious, Republicans seem to buy the liberal world view of themselves," write Peter Collier and David Horowitz. "When liberals attack Willie Horton commercials as racist, many Republicans feel the critics may have a point. Jack Kemp never stops apologizing for Republicans' absence during the civil-rights revolution of the Sixties. In doing so, he forgets that opponents of civil-rights reform were the Southern Democrats."

Opposition to race preferences, for instance, is unpopular with the press; it is considered gauche in good company and activates GOP guilt on race. Hence, the chances of Republicans' vigorously pursuing it in this Congress are almost nil. They can't even pass uncontroversial measures touching on race. Last year Rep. Bill McCollum (R., Fla.) pushed a juvenile-crime bill making minor adjustments to federal law called the "Violent Youth Predators Act." Black Democratic Judiciary Committee members Mel Watt, Sheila Jackson Lee, and Maxine Waters threw a fit, arguing that the word "predator," indeed the entire bill, was a "code word." After McCollum obliged by striking the offending word, Waters and Co. proceeded to provoke hours of debate on the bill's "findings," a collection of statements of statistical fact.

THE upshot was that in a body controlled by Republicans, with all sorts of procedural mechanisms meant to make it possible for the majority to squash the minority, Republicans got rolled by representatives of the most absurd fringe of the Democratic Party. Can you imagine Bob Dornan striking such fear into the hearts of House Democrats? That such a role reversal is inconceivable speaks to another aspect of the GOP personality: Republicans' discomfort with power, both its zealous pursuit and its active use. This is partly a function of being in the minority in Congress for so long—"Republicans have a congressional culture of losing," is how one Senate aide puts it—but it goes deeper than that.

Says one Hill aide: "Henry Waxman never feels guilty about anything he does, because he's driven by an ideological vision. People who are driven by ideology have no time for guilt." Many Republicans, especially among the older generation, don't have that ideological drive. Furthermore, insofar as Republicans have an ideology, it is one of distrust of power. This means that Republicans are less likely than Democrats to have chosen politics as a first career, that once they undertake a political career they are less likely to take it seriously, and that they are more likely to allow principles and ethical considerations to get in the way of their practice of it.

The result often is lop-sided struggles in which it's clear the Democrats are more willing to fight to the death, like that first meeting of the Thompson committee. There are signs that this is changing. The vote (for good or ill) to keep Newt Gingrich as Speaker was one. "In essence," says former RNC spokesman Ed Gillespie, "the House Republicans said to the *New York Times* and Dan Rather, 'Go pound sand. We're in control of the House of Representatives.'" But the GOP still counts among its leaders politicians who have absorbed all its insecurities, like several GOP governors (see "Slight Expectations," page 17) and notably Jack Kemp, who works obsessively to prove the purity of his motives. Guilty about race, he has praised Louis Farrakhan; and he famously refused to take the gloves off in last year's campaign.

During the vice-presidential debate, when Al Gore was asked about the Roberto Alomar spitting incident, he paid his opponent a now-famous compliment: "Jack Kemp has been a powerful and needed voice against that kind of coarseness and incivility that you referred to in the question. I think it's an extremely valuable service to have a voice within the Republican Party who says we ought to be one nation."

"Well, thank you, Al," replied Kemp, at which the audience, sensing sarcasm, laughed. Kemp, however, moved swiftly to disabuse them. "I mean that very, very sincerely." Kemp was quite unashamed about dissociating himself from his party—and why not? It's the ultimate Republican thing to do. □

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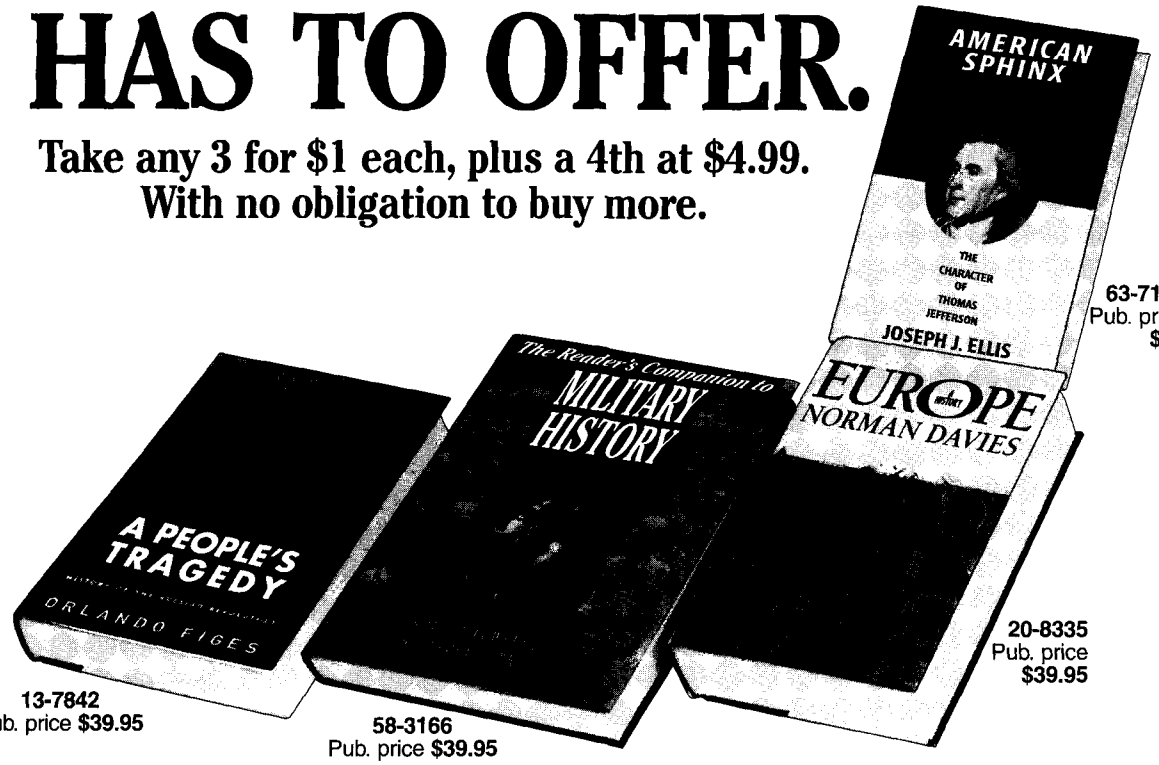

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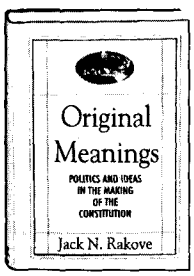

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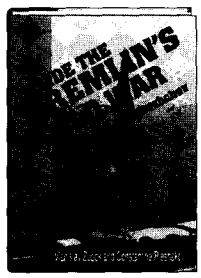

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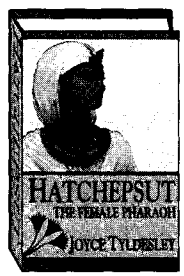

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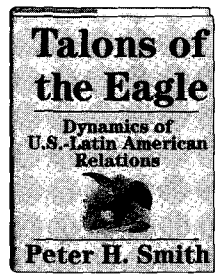

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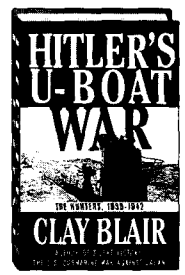

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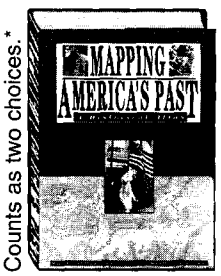

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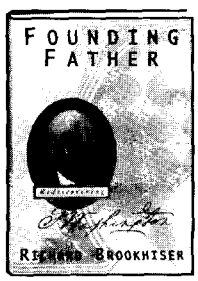

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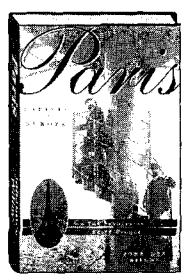

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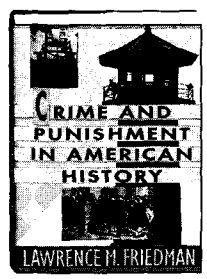

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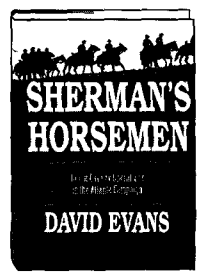

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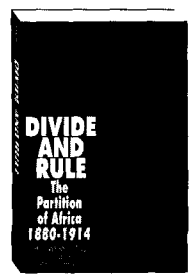

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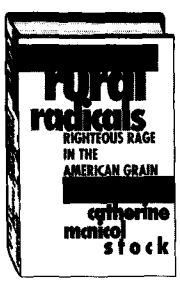

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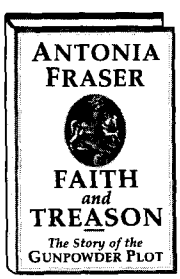

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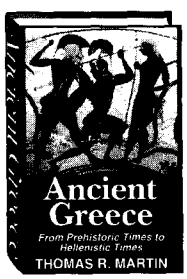

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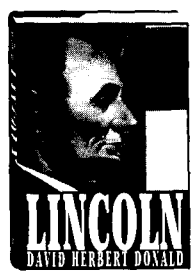

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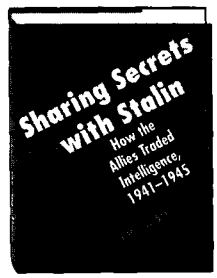

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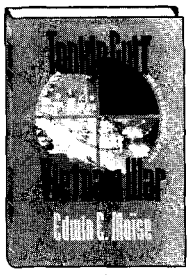

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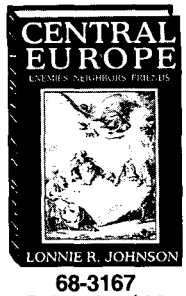

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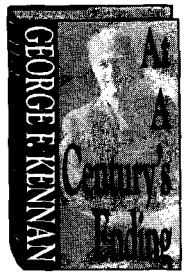

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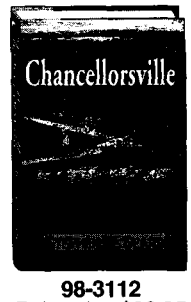

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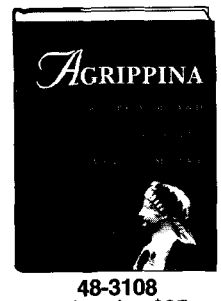

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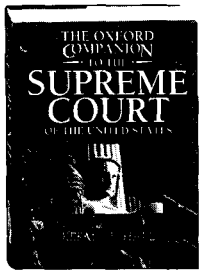

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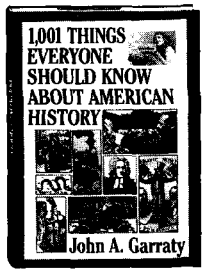

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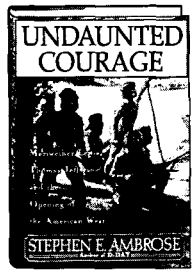

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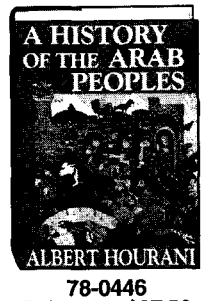

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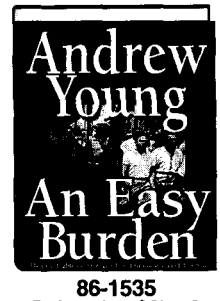

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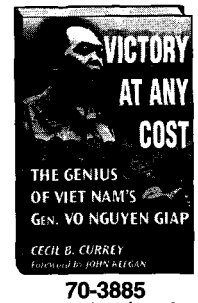

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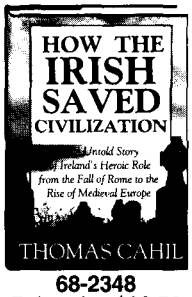

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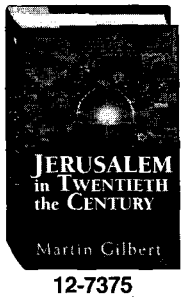

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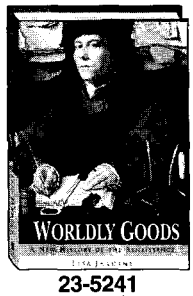

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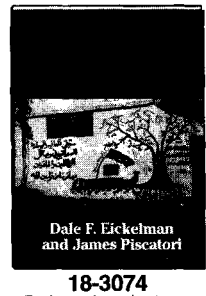

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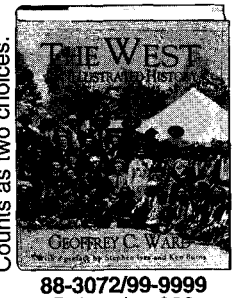

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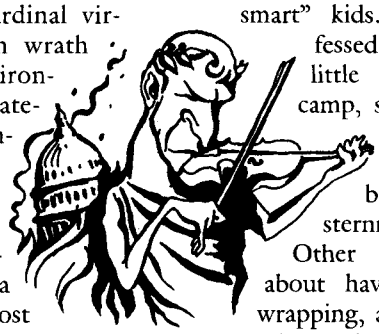
BREAD & CIRCUSES

THE classroom crusade to train little eco-warriors first became apparent to me six years ago when our youngest son, then in the second grade, began scolding the family about mixing paper and plastic, running "unnecessary" errands in the car, and being inadequately concerned about dying species around the globe. Although attending a Catholic school, he was shaky on the cardinal virtues—but he rose up in wrath when he spotted an environmental offense. I was grateful there was no Environmental Bureau handy. We were raising a potential informer.



At age 13 John now enjoys a clearer view—and a different school. But most American schoolchildren are being indoctrinated about our doomed planet and urged to take political action on the basis of faulty science.

In the Fifties, lessons on climate, animals' habitats, and natural resources were scientifically sound, if simplified, and might be complemented by a poster contest on the theme "Don't Be a Litterbug." In the Eighties, a nine-year-old ended her letter to President Bush by writing, "Mr. President, if you ignore this letter we will all die of pollution and the ozone layer."

In their new book, *Facts Not Fear, A Parent' Guide to Teaching Children About the Environment*, Michael Sanera and Jane S. Shaw detail the disinformation about ecological disasters routinely taught in schools. The authors reviewed 130 earth-science textbooks, 170 environmental books for children, and related curriculum materials from environmental and business groups. They conclude: "Unbiased materials are a rare exception. Most materials either present only one side of an issue, select worst-case examples, or omit important information."

Children are taught that plastic is bad, the ozone layer is being destroyed, wildlife is disappearing, billions face starvation, and melting polar ice caps will cause New York City to be submerged so that "only the tops of tall buildings will be above the water." The primary villains are economic growth, technology, and the United States. Children fed these apocalyptic visions indict their parents as shoddy stewards of the environment.

And parents plead guilty. A few years ago the *New York Times* ran a story about parents harassed by their "eco-smart" kids. One mother confessed that as soon as her little eco-warrior left for camp, she threw a few bottles in the trash. "I guess now I'm rebelling against Jacob's sternness," she explained. Other parents complained about having to hide plastic wrapping, aerosol cans, and diet soda. It is pleasing to see the "question authority" generation (Jacob's parents met at a 1961 Washington Square peace rally) living under pint-sized dictators. But polls show that many parents form their own views on the environment based on what their children tell them.

Radical environmentalists moved in on the schools because they understood this. In 1972, one professor, who had designed a "Rachel Carson Project," suggested to his fellow educators: "Perhaps the best way to encourage the new [environmental] ethic through formal education is to pervade the culture of the school, subtly but powerfully, rather than establish a single new course." The author of the best-selling book *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth* tells children, "Kids have a lot of power. Whenever you say something, grown-ups have to listen. . . . So if saving the Earth is important to you, then grown-ups will have to follow along."

Not only parents but also politicians are the targets of this kid power. Jonathan Adler of the Competitive Enterprise Institute points out that an increasing number of educational materials explicitly urge political action. "Children are told to write letters to Congress, draft petitions, and boycott products that are not deemed politically correct." Popular cartoons and toys also promote the radicals' agenda. Adler points out that the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are "repeatedly telling children to 'write to your government at every level—city, county, state, and federal.' " G.I. Joes now do battle with a figure called "CEO Cesspool," who seeks world domination in order to spread his toxic waste.

SANERA and Shaw don't merely decry the dismal state of environmental education. In a clear and readable format, they provide sound science to refute the phony eco-facts contained in most textbooks. Parents armed with *Facts Not Fear* can see that their own children are well informed, and receptive teachers might be given a copy and invited to question what they've been teaching their students. But millions of children will remain indoctrinated soldiers in the environmental wars.

More than thirty states mandate curriculum requirements on the environment, and the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Education provides schools with materials that contradict their own studies on the environment. Unfortunately, such miseducation enjoys bi-partisan support. Adler reports that "Too many Republicans want to promote environmental education because they see it as a free vote to burnish their green credentials." Even Sen. Jim Inhofe (R., Okla.), a solid conservative, is a chief sponsor of federal legislation that promotes the ongoing indoctrination of students.

Sanera's own educational efforts led to reforms in Arizona's environmental curriculum. A new law mandates that instruction must be based on current scientific information and include discussion of economic implications. Behavior modification and the promotion of political activity are expressly forbidden. Most Republican legislatures and governors, however, have shown little interest in such "controversial" reforms.

But Sanera reports that his book has struck a nerve. "Every parent has a story, and, having been unchallenged for 25 years, the environmentalists are beginning to be put on the defensive."

Until politicians work up the political courage to call for an end to this educational abuse, parents might try a little harassing of their own. Don't eco-brats realize that Nintendo games and television have plastic components, and waste energy? —KATE O'BEIRNE

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ON THE SCENE

Land of the Free

RADEK SIKORSKI

Roman Genn

TALLINN

IMAGINE a country with a flat tax and a currency fixed to a generally recognized standard, but with no tariffs and no government deficits. Imagine further that it has a beautiful historic capital, miles of unspoiled beaches, and agriculture unsullied by modern industrial methods. If such a country were also a solid democracy and a candidate for membership in the European Union, would one not be tempted to invest a few dimes in its dynamic stock exchange? Incidentally, its citizenry is encouraged to own guns, but you have to pass a psychological and an aptitude test to get a license. You read it here first: All these things are true of Estonia, the northernmost of the Baltic states and once the smallest republic of the Soviet Union.

Estonia's equivalent of the IRS is the eighth wonder of the world. Its headquarters is a privately owned house in downtown Tallinn with computers standing on makeshift tables. Stacks of old filing cabinets do for partition walls.

Mr. Sikorski is NR's roving correspondent.

Its chief, Mr. Kalev Jarvelill, is chubby and reserved, and he wears an unfashionable suit, exactly how an honest tax official should be. He is 31. Mr. Jarvelill sounds apologetic because the expenditure on building a permanent office for his staff is about to push up the cost of collecting taxes this year to just over 1 per cent. In the U.S., the cost of collecting the tax plus the cost of compliance is about 25 cents per dollar collected.

The Estonian tax bureau's budget director, Mr. Tony Smith, age 22, is a more enthusiastic sort. He is delighted to explain that most Estonians do not fill out any tax forms at all. The others use a single sheet of paper. No Estonian I met needed an accountant or a tax lawyer. Everybody pays the same rate of 26 per cent. That is also the rate of the corporate tax; so it makes no sense to fiddle about founding bogus companies. Estonia's youthful tax officials are still dissatisfied. At 33 per cent, employees' health and unemployment insurance, which is collected like a tax, is too high and hence responsible for bigger arrears than all the other taxes combined.

What is most remarkable about the Estonian flat tax is that it was entirely a native invention. Mr. Jarvelill and Mr. Smith speak only halting English and had never heard of Dick Gephardt or Steve Forbes. "It was simple," they told me. "We inherited this ridiculous Soviet system where everybody spent weeks filling forms, so we changed it to something more convenient for all."

Estonian monetary policy is also simplicity itself. The Estonian Central Bank simply has to match with a Deutschmark every 8 crowns it issues in cash and commercial bank reserves. Estonians argue that the arrangement is better even than the gold standard because instead of bearing the costs of stockpiling gold, they get the interest on keeping German government securities. The fact that it would take an act of parliament to change the exchange rate has some remarkable consequences. At 12 to 15 per cent, Estonia's market-based lending rates are among the lowest in the region.

Nor does the Bank of Estonia need to worry about the viability of commercial banks. Because money cannot be printed at will, the central bank cannot pump liquidity into the system, even during a recession. The government does not borrow, and so there are no government bonds. No government bonds, and so banks cannot sponge off the state. In Estonia, when banks do not behave responsibly, they go under, and so the country already has banks like the Hansa, with one of the safest portfolios anywhere in Europe.

Relieved of the tasks of selling Treasuries and playing nanny to the banks, Estonia's finance minister, Mr. Mart Opmann, can focus on the main task at hand: making sure that departments keep within their spending limits. Thanks to this, Estonian government spending as a proportion of GDP is about 36 per cent, a good 10 percentage points below the European average. This is largely because the unemployment benefit is low, about $50 per month. "I think about 10 per cent are without work at any time," says Mr. Opmann, "but people find jobs quickly when they have to. People in Estonia know that we cannot afford socialism." Sternness produces results. Inflation has dropped from 89 per cent in 1993 to below 20 per cent last year, to a projected 13 per cent this year.

Estonia's equivalent of the IRS is the eighth wonder of the world. Its headquarters is a privately owned house.

Naturally, the policy will not really be tested until there is a major recession. But Estonian financiers are confident that the system is to some extent self-regulatory. In a recession, the economy would contract sharply, driving down prices and wages, making Estonian goods competitive again. In other words, Estonia would take any punch on the chin rather than try to cheat through

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debasing the currency. That's the theory, at least.

In practice, do employees anywhere in the world accept wage cuts these days? The president of Estonian Air, Mr. Borge Thornbech, a Dane, thinks his staff would. Estonian airline pilots still earn only a fifth as much as their Danish colleagues. Their incomes are rising fast, but on the understanding that cuts would be swift in case of a business downturn. Estonians stress that they know they will have to rely on their own savings when times are lean. "But at least our savings are in a strong currency that will keep its value."

Arguably, Estonia is a better case study for classical economics than Singapore or Hong Kong because, unlike the two Far Eastern cities, it is not the entry port to a vast hinterland. (It could be—but Russia is fighting an economic war against Estonia, imposing double the normal tariff on its goods.) Estonia's success or failure will be more closely linked with the policies it pursues than is the case for its Asian counterparts.

The record is still mixed. The Tallinn local council is still socialist-dominated, and the city is still drab and neglected. Shoddily built Soviet gas, electricity, and water networks require increasing maintenance outlays. Nevertheless, I believe that a tourist with no deep knowledge of the region would already think Estonia was one of the more prosperous countries of Central Europe rather than a former Soviet republic.

West European governments usually face a social revolt when they try to live within their means. In the United States it took a decade to agree to try to balance the budget, and the flat tax is still regarded as revolutionary. So how did Estonia manage it?

Thanks to Russia, it seems. Because Moscow tried to colonize the republic, Estonians perceive socialism as an alien creed. The Estonian Communist Party was largely Russian, and Russians occupied most of the top jobs in the bureaucracy and in state enterprises. So, when Soviet rule collapsed, there was no Estonian political pressure to keep parts of the old order.

Estonians' attachment to their currency is also a legacy of Soviet rule. By 1991, when Mikhail Gorbachev sent tanks to suppress Baltic independence movements, the ruble had become a joke currency. With the introduction of the crown, shops suddenly filled up with goods unseen for two generations. The tones in which Estonians talk of the crown contain something of the reverence that the Germans have for their Deutschmark—as a symbol of prosperity—but there are undertones of the Declaration of Independence as well.

So, for a country to adopt nothing but sound economic policies it appears that it must first be conquered by a socialist neighbor, preferably a virulently nationalist one, whose insane policies bring the country to the brink of ruin. Clearly, American patriots should pray for a lost war with Quebec. □

Handling Hong Kong

SOL SANDERS

Frederick H. Carlson

HONG KONG

EVER since 1984 when the British agreed to turn Hong Kong over to Mainland China, there has been intense speculation as to how far Peking would permit the 155-year-old Crown Colony to keep its free and easy ways in order to preserve its role as a world financial and commercial center—and the yeast of China's burgeoning export economy. Now, as the turnover date (July 1) rapidly approaches, the dilemma for the Chinese Communists appears double-edged.

There is dramatic evidence of divided counsel in Peking about how to handle Hong Kong's eight million people, their huge foreign-exchange reserves ($60 billion, compared to Peking's own record $105 billion), and its role as an entrepôt for the region. But events are taking on all the aspects of a Chinese opera, exposing the feuds and personalities in the Mainland otherwise kept more or less under wraps. And until most vestiges of British rule can be wiped out, Hong Kong looks to remain a showcase for Mainland China's problems.

Mr. Sanders is a veteran foreign correspondent.

While the Mainland is in a paroxysm of economic development, at least in those areas adjacent to Hong Kong, Peking's decision-making process is in limbo, dominated by its gerontocracy, the remnant of the revolutionary period half a century ago. Investors, not to say citizens, are constantly vexed by sudden changes in policy. Recently Peking has made a feint back toward Maoist orthodoxy, whatever that might be, warning journalists and writers and filmmakers to come back to the true faith. But even if the frail compromise between bankrupt Marxist theory and old-fashioned Chinese entrepreneurship can be continued, the regime's obscurantism will be hard to maintain in Hong Kong, where there have been few secrets from a wild and woolly local press.

Take the whole issue of who formally will govern Hong Kong. Until recently the Peking line was delivered to Hong Kong's residents via Xinhua News Agency's Hong Kong office, abetted by half a dozen huge government corporations like the Bank of China, China Resources, and CITIC, the Communists' largest commercial/financial arm. Now other entities are coming into the picture, not least the local taipans whose vast fortunes have been built on the Colony's phenomenal prosperity as China's window on the world. Their crown prince is Larry Fung, son of China's vice president, a high flyer who flits between the (ex-Royal) Hong Kong Jockey Club and his estate in Sussex, formerly owned by Harold Macmillan's family. (Fung just bought a large chunk of the Hong Kong subsidiary of CITIC at 25 per cent below the Hong Kong stock-market price.)

A four-hundred-man advisory search committee—made up of old leftist hacks, local professionals, and these leading capitalists—recently nominated the new Chief Executive of the Special Administrative Zone, C. W. Tung. Tung

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is a lackluster scion of a shipping empire whom Peking and local capital bailed out of bankruptcy a decade or so ago.

So far, Tung's role has been to make pro-Peking statements and rationalize the Communists' precipitate actions—such as creating in secret an appointed legislature to take the place of the partially elected British Legislative Council six months ahead of the turnover. With myriad problems to tackle—for example, how to translate English common law into Chinese, and where the right of appeal ends with the British Privy Council no longer in the act—Tung has diverted his energies to setting up an inordinately expensive (and secure) new office because the *feng sui* (omens) of the century-old Government House were said not to be good. In any case, he announced that in the nitty-gritty negotiations between the retiring Hong Kong government and Peking, he would sit as a Chinese Communist delegate.

There are lots of tough issues: Hong Kong's proposed new Chinese entity of "one country, two systems" can only magnify Peking's economic conundrums. Chief among them is revenue collection. The central government has a congeries of almost haphazard "contractual" arrangements with its various political divisions for how much each will pay into the central coffers each year; many of these idiosyncratic relationships had their origins in tradeoffs made during the climax of the 1940s civil war.

Shanghai, for example, the old powerhouse of pre-Liberation China and home to a disproportionately large number of Communist Party leaders, had been anteing up most of the central government's revenues. With its infrastructure near collapse, "the old whore of the Yangtze" was given its head four years ago under Deng Xiaoping's new "market socialism." The city took off in a speculative boom, with more office space built in four years than Hong Kong has built in thirty years. And Shanghai's announced intention is to regain its pre–World War II status, replacing Hong Kong as East Asia's financial capital.

Meanwhile, Canton, the southern dynamo of China's recent boom, to which most Hong Kongers have close commercial, linguistic, and even family ties, is picking up only a fraction of Peking's bills. To the extent that Hong Kong's special position—with its quintessential capitalism—is maintained, it is going to magnify all these policy problems for Peking. (One of Peking's stream of ad hoc proposals on Hong Kong issues suggested that it might set aside half its foreign-exchange reserves against market fluctuations during the Hong Kong transition. That was met with guffaws here; Peking's entire reserves are less than 20 per cent the value of Hong Kong market investments, and intervention would only feed any panic.)

The so-called Basic Law negotiated between London and Peking to cover the transition included vague assurances that free speech would be maintained. That would really test "one country, two systems." On last year's anniversary of the 1989 student massacre at Tiananmen Square, 45,000 students from Hong Kong's seven, often rambunctious, universities gathered on the Happy Valley racecourse to memorialize their comrades. Last fall they also initiated a protest against a Japanese claim to some supposedly oil-rich atolls in the East China Sea, after Peking had forbidden its own students to participate. When outgoing British Governor Chris Patten moved to enshrine, however belatedly, Hong Kong's civil rights into law, Peking announced its opposition.

What could be the most important test of all is immigration. During the half-century since the end of World War II, Hong Kong's crises have usually turned on the possibility of being swamped by refugees from one of China's periodic upheavals, usually brought on by radical Communist experiments. During these past Mainland blowups a thin line of Hong Kong police and the British Gurkha regiments have stood between the Colony and chaos. The Gurkhas left in November. There are 100 million rootless people sloshing around China, squeezed off the overcrowded land and looking for a livelihood. In neighboring Canton, 10,000 to 15,000 northerners arrive *daily* looking for work in the booming export industries pushed over the border by Hong Kong's rising costs. Locals say it is inevitable that some—but how many?—of them are going to follow "the princelings" (sons and daughters of high Party and government officials) who have pushed luxury apartment prices in the Colony to all-time highs despite the insecurity of the coming takeover.

All this means that the future of China itself, and not just the fate of Hong Kong, is riding on the way the takeover is accomplished. □

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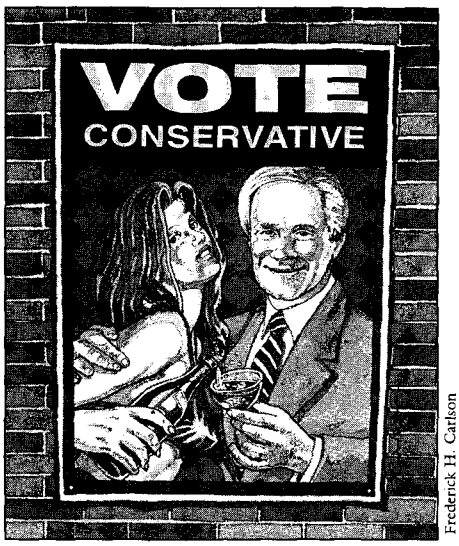
The Return of the Cad

ANTHONY LEJEUNE



Frederick H. Carlson

LONDON

"ONE of the great immorality stories of our time" was a commentator's verdict. He was describing the selection of a new Conservative candidate for Chelsea and Kensington, probably the safest Conservative seat in Britain. Political scientists analyze the changing complexion of the parties—how far the Conservatives are moving right, whether "New Labor" has really shed its atavistic socialism. But the interest in Chelsea and Kensington was altogether more lively.

The need for a new candidate was itself a tragi-comedy. The sitting member, Sir Nicholas Scott, had the misfortune, a little while ago, so to maneuver his car after some local conviviality that he nearly squashed a baby in a stroller. The baby's father, a foreigner, expostulated, whereupon Sir Nicholas took cover in a nearby house, leaving a female companion to express her own unflattering opinion of foreigners with babies who got in the way.

There was a row, but his sophisticated constituents forgave him. Then, at last autumn's Conservative Party Conference, he not only failed to arrive at an event where he should have been the host, but was discovered recumbent and somnolent in the street; a consequence, he explained, of some medically required painkillers' mixing badly with a modest glass of wine. This time his Constituency Association "de-selected" him from being their candidate at the coming election.

In such circumstances, the tendency is to choose a new candidate who is more or less the opposite of the old one. Sir Nicholas was over sixty, a former cabinet minister, and had behavioral problems. So did Chelsea and Kensington choose a young man of untried potential and impeccable reputation? Not exactly.

There was a significant political shift. Scott is a Europhile: all the short-listed candidates were Euroskeptic. Scott was a wet: the short list was solidly right-wing. The four finalists were all considered pretty good: but one was an unsmart woman from the provinces, one a local man about whom too much was known, and the runner-up was worthy but dull.

Behold then the winner: Alan Clark, 68 years old, a former cabinet minister—and as for his behavioral record, "Are there any skeletons in your cupboard?" he was asked.

"Whole graveyardsful," he replied.

His father, Kenneth Clark, a life peer, was popularly known as "Lord Clark of Civilization" in honor of his wonderfully arrogant cultural series on television. Alan inherited, and lives in, a battlemented seventeenth-century castle. He is a multimillionaire. He is also a respected military historian, who raised a few hackles by musing on how well the German army had fought in defeat.

Tact is not his strong suit. He has described the present chancellor of the exchequer as a "puffy podgeball" and the deputy prime minister as a man who had "bought his own furniture" (that is, *nouveau riche*). When obliged to read a feminist-oriented statement in the House of Commons, he gabbled it derisively, afterward cheerfully admitting that he had not been "entirely sober." He outraged sensibilities by referring generically to "Bongo Bongo Land."

Unsurprisingly, he never achieved senior office: but he admired Margaret Thatcher for her Boadicea-like qualities and she was intrigued by him. When she fell, he relinquished office and in 1992 retired from Parliament.

In 1994 he published his diaries, which were utterly candid not only in the opinions expressed about other people, but about his own sex life. His amazingly loyal wife, Jane, was only 16 when, aged 30, he married her. In a very short while, he was having affairs. "Girls have to be succulent," he said, "and that means under 25."

Lust seems to have been in his heart almost continuously. The most celebrated episode involved the wife and two daughters of an English barrister and part-time judge who had emigrated to South Africa. Alan called them his "coven" and described assignations with all three. When the story broke, they came steaming back from South Africa in well-publicized rage (your correspondent dined out for weeks on the strength of having known them).

And these were only the extracts from his diaries which Alan Clark himself considered most publishable! There are said to be 18 more volumes. Meanwhile, he regretted having left Parliament. He missed the conspiring and the gossip.

AFTER Nicholas Scott's all-too-literal downfall, the burghers of Chelsea and Kensington set up what they called the SCOTCH committee—"Seeking Candidates of Temperate Character and Habits." Nevertheless, Clark made it through to that final meeting, which was attended by nearly one thousand members of the local Conservative Association. His performance had them rolling in the aisles. "I liked him like a lot of women like him," admitted one lady of mature years.

"I'm not worried by his conduct," said an elderly man; "a bit envious maybe."

You must be good in future, they giggled: and he promised that he would.

Some, of course, were disgusted, but surprisingly few. Prime Minister John Major, perhaps gritting his teeth, said that Alan Clark's return would bring "a deal of color back into the House." Matthew Parris, formerly a Conservative MP, now a parliamentary sketch-writer, said it would have been a pity to waste such an unlosable seat on "some vanilla-flavored pixie. Bring on the fruitcakes."

Actually, Alan Clark is, as he will tell you himself, a clever man. A safe pair of hands, though, he is not. But then, Parliament is much less important than it used to be, with power draining away to Europe and the spotlight moved to television. There's little left but show. So why not enjoy what everybody agrees to be "a class act"? □

Mr. Lejeune is NR's longtime London correspondent.

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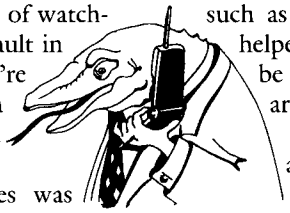
GEKKO

I REMEMBER when I lived in Canada in the late Seventies getting pompous lectures from cynical local bankers who thought the American embargo on loans to Cuba was stupidly self-destructive. Those bankers had the edifying experience of watching their loans go into default in 1981 and thereafter. They're still selling for maybe a quarter on the dollar in a good market.



The gist of the lectures was that a firm Communist hand was perhaps the best way to ensure that the lender or investor would get his money back. Guess not. But what we learn from history seems to be that we don't learn from history, because Hong Kong's market has been outperforming even our own. It was up 33.5 per cent last year, and its outperformance is continuing this year. This even though the writ of Anglo-Saxon law will not run in Hong Kong after the handover to the Chinese Communist government in five months' time. Now, the people from the People's Republic have been entirely open about their intention to ignore even the vague reassurances they originally gave Margaret Thatcher about civil liberties, etc., etc. But the money managers back here have decided to come in right behind the PRC officials and businessmen who are buying up property and businesses, and they're taking the U.S. public's money with them.

Since it's pointless to suggest to them that the transfer of power to a corrupt dictatorship is going to be bad for business, let's look at some more concrete reasons to sell off your Hong Kong positions. Much of the speculative fervor there centers on real estate, but the real estate has to be occupied by people and businesses from the rest of the economy, and that's actually pretty sluggish. The monetary base is up just 5 per cent from a year ago, which is not much compared to the peak rate of expansion of 25 per cent in 1993. Since inflation has come down, that means that real interest rates in Hong Kong are the highest since 1990. The Colony's trade balance is rather weak, and the trade balance is much more important to Hong Kong's liquidity than to markets such as our own. Government investment in facilities such as the new airport, which has helped support the economy, will be declining as major projects are completed.

In short, this is a place that, at best, is looking forward to single-digit growth. Investors, however, are paying for double digits. Even if you're as cynical as those foolish Canadian bankers, it's time to take your marbles and go home. Watch the "peaceful transition" on TV —not your trading screen.

■ There are a number of markets in commodities that are in, to put it kindly, long basing patterns. In other words, they haven't gone anywhere because every time they seem to be ready to do so, a large holder sells from its stockpile.

One of the better examples, of course, has been the platinum-group metals, or PGMs, which despite a long-term production-to-use deficit, has scraped along only thanks to steady selling by post-Soviet Russia. Readers will recall that I have come to like the long platinum/short gold play.

There is now a scrap of evidence that the Russians may not be quite so interested in selling the PGMs as they were. The Japanese, who are the largest importers of PGMs, have been waiting since December for a Russian delegation to show up so that the year's trade flows can be agreed. So far, no desperate sellers in fur hats have arrived. In other words, the Russians may have decided that they are going to slow down the sales from their stockpiles. Which is not good news for auto companies, electronics manufacturers, and jewelers. Fortunately for them, there appears to have been a large American speculator who despaired and dumped his platinum position at the end of last year. As his former hoard is dispersed among the buyers, platinum prices have been subdued. But there was no such liquidation in palladium, for which the major source is Russia. Palladium has been rising gently as the industrial users quietly stock up before anyone notices.

■ When the science of economics and the witchcraft of technical analysis conflict, the serious investor can have no doubts—go with the witchcraft. At the beginning of last year, I looked over the pile of economic reports on my desk, and weighed their conclusions about the bond market against the conclusions of a (much smaller) pile of chartists. The economists liked the bond and the chartists did not. The results are in, and the chartists won.

So I was not in the least surprised to hear that the top market timer, as measured by Mark Hulbert, the newsletter rater, was Arch Crawford of Crawford Perspectives. Arch, a friendly North Carolinian, uses a combination of planetary alignments and chart-based technical analysis. If he were only an economist, we wouldn't have wasted our time.

You may laugh, but compare Crawford's long-term record to, say, that of the economics department of a money-center bank. When Hulbert last measured Crawford's five-year record last August, Arch had beaten the S&P 500 by over 39 per cent.

What does Crawford look for now? That's what's interesting. "I am wildly bullish for the first half of February, when we are going to make the top of the whole bull market. After that, we're going into at least a two-year decline of 35 to 50 per cent of total market value. The worst of the drop will occur after the lunar eclipse on March 23."

Don't say you weren't warned.

—JOHN DIZARD

"Uh oh, here comes Mr. Worry Wart. Pretend you don't see him."

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To Liberty Via America

With its simple but deep insights into market competition and entrepreneurship, Austrian economics has a lot to teach American economists of every stripe.

MICHAEL PROWSE

LIKE most of my generation in Britain, I emerged from higher education with a strong affection for the public sector. Like so many others, I believed that you could not be a compassionate, caring person unless you believed in big government. I accepted that market forces had some uses in promoting economic efficiency. But I thought that the government had to intervene in countless ways in order to prevent "market failure" and that it had a moral duty to redistribute resources on a massive scale in order to ensure "social justice."

I don't feel much need to apologize for having held these views. They were entirely natural for someone brought up in a welfare state. None of my teachers in school or university seemed to have any interest in or first-hand knowledge of industry or commerce. Entrepreneurship was equated with greed. It is hardly surprising that as a young journalist in the early 1980s, coming from this background, I was instinctively hostile toward the Thatcher government's free-market agenda. As for Austrian economics, it is, again, hardly surprising that I heard nothing about it at my universities. When I was a graduate student at the London School of Economics, that distinguished institution was going through a Keynesian phase: Friedrich Hayek might never have passed through the LSE's portals.

How did my opinions move toward classical liberalism and the Austrian economics of Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, and Carl Menger? Three sets of forces helped change my views. The first was the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It struck me as intellectually dishonest to argue that the collapse of planning on a large scale had no implications for planning on a small scale. My confidence in government intervention everywhere diminished as a result of those historic events.

The second influence was simply moving from England to the United States seven years ago. There are, of course, plenty of supporters of big government in Washington, D.C. But the free-market/libertarian case is presented with far greater vigor here than in the UK. My faith in markets as a ladder of personal opportunity has been strengthened, because here in the United States the link between wealth and social class seems less pronounced than in Europe. It is striking how often American supporters of liberty and free markets come from relatively humble backgrounds.

But probably the most important influence was my own reading and study. About six years ago I took the advice in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* rather too seriously. "He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that," Mill wrote. I decided to make a better effort to understand the arguments of critics. I ended up, to my embarrassment, concluding that their arguments were better than mine.

The first Austrian book I read was Hayek's *Constitution of Liberty*. I then turned to Hayek's *The Fatal Conceit* and his three-volume opus, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*. I noticed that Hayek frequently referred to a Ludwig von Mises—a name I had never heard in the UK. So I read *Human Action* from cover to cover. Some people find this book difficult or off-putting. I found it inspiring from start to finish. In fact, in describing my reaction I can do no better than quote from a review in *The Economist* of December 1949. *Human Action*, it said, is a "magnificent book; intellectual power roars through it like a great wind; it has the impetus of first-rate polemic and the impeccable coherence of Euclid."

After *Human Action* I turned to more recent books on Austrian theory and read works by Mises's two most prominent American students: Murray Rothbard and Israel Kirzner. At that point I began to realize that Austrian eco-

Mr. Prowse is a columnist for the Financial Times. *This essay is adapted from a speech for the Ludwig von Mises Institute.*

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nomics is very much a living tradition—at least in the United States. The clarity of Rothbard's writing on economics prompted me to read his political works, especially *For a New Liberty*, his uncompromising defense of "anarcho-capitalism." At this time I became familiar with the work of Henry Hazlitt, James Buchanan, Anthony de Jasay, and other writers in the classical-liberal tradition. I had come a long way from the British welfare state.

Over the years I've managed to publish quite a few articles and columns on Austrian and classical-liberal themes in the *Financial Times,* though this has not always been easy. In the minds of London-based editors, Austrian economics is something that should be covered, if at all, by correspondents in Europe. I'm supposed to write about America, not about the finer points of nineteenth-century Viennese culture. It cuts little ice to argue—in Karen Vaughn's words—that there has been a "transfer of a tradition."

So I've had to be imaginative in thinking up justifications for articles. In 1994, for example, I wrote a long op-ed piece presenting Austrian theory as an "antidote" to the "economic correctness" of Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors, then headed by Laura Tyson. Last fall, I smuggled in a piece on Austrian business-cycle theory in the form of an imaginary conversation on the U.S. economic outlook between Keynes and Mises. This conversation ended with Keynes describing Mises as a "genius" and declaring: "You never know—I might become an Austrian." Actually that is not as improbable as it sounds: Keynes was deeply impressed by Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* and would probably have been appalled by much of postwar "Keynesian economics."

SO WHAT, from the perspective of a journalist (and thus, in a sense, a representative of the public mind), do I find appealing about Austrian economics? I should say that my appetite was whetted initially by the sheer implausibility of the Austrian story. The message is that the vast majority of economists—including great names such as Paul Samuelson and Milton Friedman—fundamentally misconceive the nature of economic processes. True understanding is restricted to a small band of thinkers, originating in Vienna, Austria. And the truth is kept from the public by the ignorance and mendacity of the profession at large. This is a most appealing story line.

Having become familiar with Austrian theory, I find that it has six great virtues. The first is the realism of the Austrian approach. Austrians analyze market capitalism as it is, not as it might be. Unlike neoclassicals, they make room for such real-world phenomena as Rupert Murdoch.

The Austrian vision of market competition as an endless dynamic process in which powerful companies struggle for commercial supremacy accords perfectly with the everyday experience of business owners and workers. You have only to look at the telecommunications or computer industries today to grasp the realism of the Austrian "process" model of competition. I need hardly underline the contrast between this red-blooded characterization of capitalism and the insipid general-equilibrium model so beloved by mainstream theorists. For the man in the street, the perfect harmony of general equilibrium is an utter fantasy. He would never believe that perfect competition occurs only in a state of equilibrium in which all companies are passive price takers, and in which nothing changes.

Austrians, I believe, have remained realistic because they have never suffered from what has been called "physics envy." Mainstream economists adopted the methods of the natural sciences in the hope of gaining greater prestige. Unfortunately, as Murray Rothbard argued, the model they chose to emulate was classical mechanics from circa 1850. Science has since moved on, but neoclassical economists remain wedded to long-outdated nostrums. They fail to grasp that the subject matter of economics is very different from that of science. Natural science deals with an objective realm of inanimate objects; economics with the subjective thoughts and feeling of human beings. It is surely ridiculous to imagine that similar mathematical techniques would apply in such different realms.

Politicians should be humble when they make decisions on behalf of the community because they rarely, if ever, possess enough knowledge to make the right decisions.

The second virtue of Austrian economics is its emphasis on the dispersal of knowledge. Hayek made this point with great clarity in some famous papers in the late 1930s and the 1940s. As he argued, the sum total of knowledge available in an economy "never exists in concentrated or integrated form but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess." It follows that nobody—and that obviously includes the government—is able to take a God's-eye view of economic or social life. Politicians should be humble and cautious when they make decisions on behalf of the community because they rarely, if ever, possess enough knowledge to make the right decisions. The fact that this humility is so rarely evident only shows that Hayek's arguments are still not widely understood.

Indeed, they are still not understood by otherwise competent economists. What, I often wonder, do mainstream economists think they are doing when they write down utility and production functions for numerous agents in an economic model? Don't they realize that nobody in a real-world economy could possibly possess all this knowledge? Once Hayek's point is grasped, there is no alternative but to adopt an Austrian view of markets: to see competition as a process by which knowledge is discovered and efficiently shifted around an economy. Knowledge is what you get as a *result* of the competitive process, not something you can assume at the outset.

I regard Hayek's argument as a powerful—perhaps the most powerful—argument against nearly all forms of government intervention. And I believe it has a special resonance for journalists who see government at close quarters. They cannot help noticing that public officials frequently have very little knowledge of the issues on which they make such sweeping decisions. They also notice that different parts of the public sector possess different "bits of incom-

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plete and frequently contradictory knowledge." Many journalists are proto-Hayekians, without knowing it.

The third virtue of Austrian economics is the Misesian theory of entrepreneurship. I've found it curious that mainstream economists have so little to say about the motive force of capitalism. They write endless papers about monetary policy, fiscal policy, and other functions of government. But entrepreneurship itself gets short shrift: indeed there is no place at all for it in the most prestigious general-equilibrium models.

But for Mises, entrepreneurship was utterly fundamental to all economic activity—indeed, to all human action, which he defined as purposeful attempts to remove feelings of uneasiness. This is because all human action occurs in conditions of radical uncertainty. We have to act, yet we cannot know the consequences of our actions. As Mises emphasized, we are thus all entrepreneurs or speculators.

When we buy a house or choose a career we must make assumptions about future real-estate prices or salary trends. If we guess correctly, we prosper, but there is always a risk of disappointment. Such everyday actions are no different in their essentials from the decisions of the business tycoon who buys factors of production today in the hope of supplying a good or service at a profit in the future.

Once one understands Mises's point, one realizes that entrepreneurship is not something one can be for or against. Properly understood it is part of the human condition; it is unavoidable if we are to act purposefully in an uncertain world.

THE fourth important virtue of the Austrian school is its interdisciplinary approach and philosophical sophistication. Today, most mainstream economists appear to be technicians, happiest when surrounded by equations or working with computers. They focus on refining the mathematical properties of existing models and rarely stop to question the realism of their underlying assumptions. Their theorizing frequently takes place in an intellectual vacuum.

Austrians, by contrast, have resisted the post–Second World War trend toward ever greater specialization. They remain political economists in a sense that Adam Smith and David Hume would have understood. They tend to be well versed in related disciplines such as political science, law, philosophy, and history. This breadth of vision is common to all the great writers in the Austrian tradition. You cannot miss it in the work of Menger, Mises, and Hayek or, more recently, in that of Rothbard and Kirzner.

As a journalist and a generalist by nature I find Austrians' capacity to relate economic issues to broader political and philosophical themes tremendously appealing. I also believe that that breadth of vision is essential if economics is to retain its repute as an intellectual discipline. If mainstream theorists fail to heed this lesson, they will increasingly become sidelined in academic debate.

The fifth virtue of Austrian economics is the clarity of its policy prescriptions. Economists in general have gained a reputation for equivocation. Their advice is nearly always hedged with qualifications: on the one hand such-and-such would be desirable, but on the other hand . . . Frustrated by these caveats, one famous politician said it was his ambition to find a "one-armed economist."

There is no denying the existence of policy differences among Austrians. Some believe that central banks' monopoly of money creation is justified, while others favor free banking. Some—especially European Austrians—support aspects of the welfare state, while others would abolish it entirely. But differences among Austrians pale into insignificance when compared with differences within the profession at large.

Mainstream economists involve themselves in highly technical debates about the efficacy of numerous different kinds of government intervention. They tend to analyze each intervention separately. Austrians look at the big picture. They recognize that each separate intervention, however sensible it seems at the time, contributes to a habit of intervention that is bad for society in the longer run. They recognize that interventions usually serve the interests of special lobbies rather than the wider community. And they recognize that legislation, once enacted, is very hard to repeal. Austrians thus tend to be opposed to intervention, period. They understand that the goal of public policy should be to maintain free entry to all markets—that this is the precondition for competition to work its magic. I am certain the public would approve this clear policy stance, if it understood the underlying rationale.

The sixth and final virtue is the Austrian school's "historical credibility." Journalists are not much impressed by abstract arguments. But they do respect people who call events and trends correctly. Austrians saw the flaws in socialism sooner than anybody else. Neo-Keynesian technocrats were still defending socialist planning in the mid 1980s, sixty years after the publication of Mises's book *Socialism*. Today, I suspect many readers would find Mises's critique of Communism so obvious as to hardly require stating: Of *course* efficient decisions will not be possible in the absence of market prices for the means of production; of *course* a socialist economy would have no means of adapting to the dynamic change that is inherent in all economic life.

Yet we should always remember that this was not obvious to the vast majority of the brightest intellects of this century. As late as 1938, in a review of an English-language version of *Socialism*, Frank H. Knight, father of the Chicago School, supported Oskar

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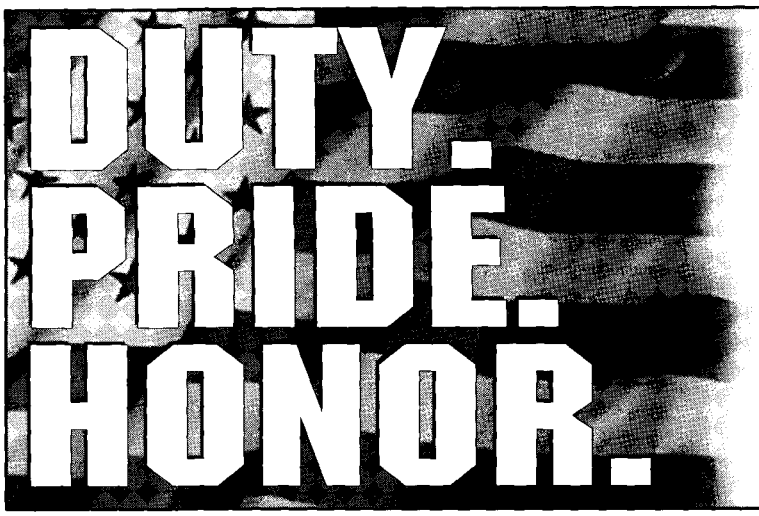

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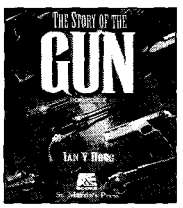

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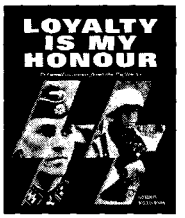

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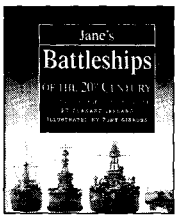

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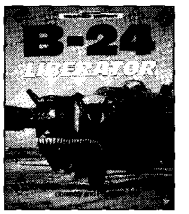

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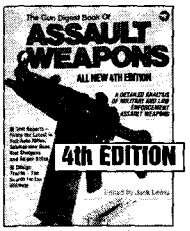

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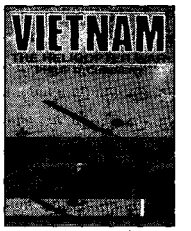

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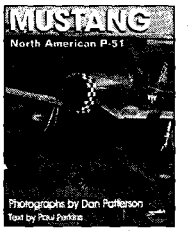

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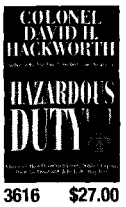

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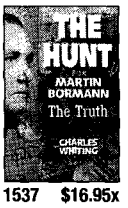

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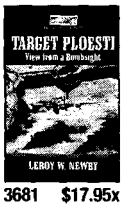

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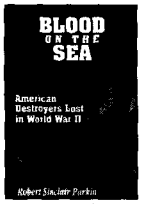

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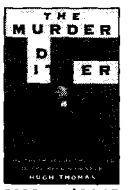

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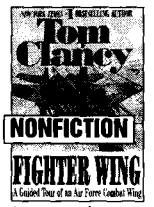

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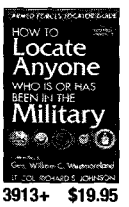

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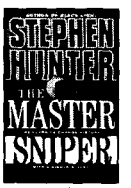

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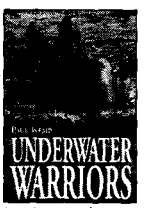

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Lange's criticism of Mises. Knight wrote that economic life under socialism "will be in general form about what it has been under capitalism." Socialism, he argued, presented a political but not an economic problem. And he accused Mises of "an amazing tissue of question-begging assertion and mere quibble." If this was the view of Frank Knight, you can imagine what lesser minds were thinking.

SO MUCH for the principal virtues of the Austrian approach. What are the challenges facing Austrians in the 1990s?

Let me start by making an heretical suggestion: The challenge is not principally intellectual. I know there are a lot of theoretical debates and disagreements. Should Austrians abandon the neoclassical concept of equilibrium altogether, as Ludwig Lachmann suggested? Or should they, following Israel Kirzner, regard market-process theory as a device for shoring up neoclassical doctrines—as a device that explains why a capitalist economy, in the absence of shocks, would tend toward an equilibrium?

I think these and other arcane disagreements are generated by an unquestioned assumption: that knowledge must always advance in all academic disciplines. This is a nineteenth-century assumption and perhaps is true of natural science: perhaps there is always more to be learned about physical reality. But in social science and the humanities the concept of progress is more debatable. There is no reason in principle why Mises and Hayek, building on nineteenth-century thought, might not already have said most of what is important about the functioning of market economies.

It may be that we are in an age of seriously diminishing returns. It may be that economics as a discipline does not have much work to do, other than to educate the young. It may be that the sterility of much economic research reflects the maturity of the discipline. Indeed, I suspect that were it not for massive public subsidies, there would be far fewer academic economists and far fewer PhDs awarded.

If this thesis is correct, it follows that the principal task for Austrians is not to add bells and whistles to the theories of Mises and Hayek, but to try to ensure that their ideas are more widely disseminated. There are two ways to proceed: first, to try to convert mainstream economists to the Austrian paradigm; second, to bypass the profession and speak directly to the broader public.

The first route is hard, but important: the economics profession is the filter through which the media and the public gain an understanding of economic processes. If most academics are neo-Keynesians, it is likely that most of the public will share their opinions.

The Keynesian revolution offers two insights into the most efficient means of achieving a paradigm shift. The first is that if you want to re-educate a profession, you have to influence students and young scholars. The Keynesian theory was victorious not because it converted mature scholars (who knew the classical counter-arguments) but because it altered the way the young were taught. Eventually the older professors died off, leaving the field in the hands of younger academics who were simply ignorant of many of the pre-Keynesian doctrines.

The second insight is that the agent of change must have mainstream credibility: Keynes's heresies were taken seriously because he had previously established his credentials in classical theory. This suggests that, unless somebody like Paul Krugman experiences a sudden conversion, Austrian infiltration of the profession will remain a slow process.

The other route—speaking directly to the public—seems more promising. I can testify from my own experience that people are extremely receptive to Austrian ideas. I got more inquiries in response to a column in the *Financial Times* last year on the *Elgar Companion to Austrian Economics* than to any other article I wrote, with the possible exception of a piece exploring Adam Smith's ethics.

There is no reason in principle why Mises and Hayek might not already have said most of what is important about the functioning of market economies.

This is encouraging, since Austrian economics is often seen as too esoteric a subject for the ordinary business reader. The level of interest reflects, I believe, a disillusionment with the scientific pretensions of mainstream economists; their comical efforts in the field of economic forecasting in particular have helped fuel popular disdain.

Austrians may not be getting many articles published in the "top" academic journals, but publishers in the real world seem increasingly interested in the school. British publishers that have recently put out Austrian texts include Cambridge University Press, Routledge, Edward Elgar, and Pickering & Chatto. The ready availability of Austrian books and articles is having an impact on public opinion. It is striking that in the past year, writers in the *Washington Post* and other popular publications have referred to Mises and Hayek without feeling the need for much explanation.

And Austrians are to be congratulated on their success in advancing the broader cause of classical liberalism. In the United States, government expenditure accounts for about a third of national income—and this level of public spending is the lowest in any large industrial country. It is probably at least three times higher than a classical liberal would desire. So it is undeniable that "welfare liberalism" as a practical political doctrine is still in pretty good shape.

However, to illustrate the turn in the tide of ideas, let me quote from the introduction to Mises's *Socialism*, published in 1922. he wrote: "Socialism is the watchword and the catchword of our day. The socialist idea dominates the modern spirit. The masses approve of it. It expresses the thoughts and feelings of all; it has set its seal upon our time."

The fact that this is no longer the case shows how much progress has in fact occurred in the past 75 years. Indeed I believe that Mises, were he still alive, would be immensely gratified by the extent to which market capitalism has become the watchword and catchword of our day. That it has become so, of course, in large measure reflects his efforts. □

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With Social Security in trouble, again, pols must decide whether to prop it up, again, or whether, finally, to scrap it.

RAMESH PONNURU

"I PREDICT confidently that a Republican presidential candidate in the year 2000 will argue strongly for privatization of Social Security," said GOP pollster Bill McInturff at a forum sponsored by the National Academy of Social Insurance last month. Another panelist, Democratic pollster Celinda Lake, immediately muttered, "And I can't wait to run against him."

Social Security privatization is being discussed more seriously than anyone would have thought possible even three years ago, but it remains potentially hazardous for politicians. When Pete du Pont proposed privatization in his 1988 run for the Republican presidential nomination, rival Jack Kemp accused him of wild-eyed libertarianism. Steve Forbes got a more positive response when he raised the issue last year, against the advice of some advisors. While Forbes remains the most prominent Republican advocate of privatization, nowadays Kemp is on board.

Two fiscal realities, and the demographic trend underlying them, are the primary causes of this seismic shift. The demographic trend has been described as "the graying of America." When the Roosevelt Administration created Social Security, the life expectancy was lower than the retirement age it established. Now 31.2 million Americans, or 12.6 per cent of the population, are over 65. In 1945, 45 workers were paying into the system for every retiree drawing benefits. Now that ratio is about 3.3:1. By 2030 it is projected to be about 2:1. If current benefits and taxes are maintained, the program will go broke. The federal deficits so harshly condemned today will look awfully good in 2030, when it is expected that Social Security alone will contribute almost $200 billion to the deficit—more than the *entire* deficit today.

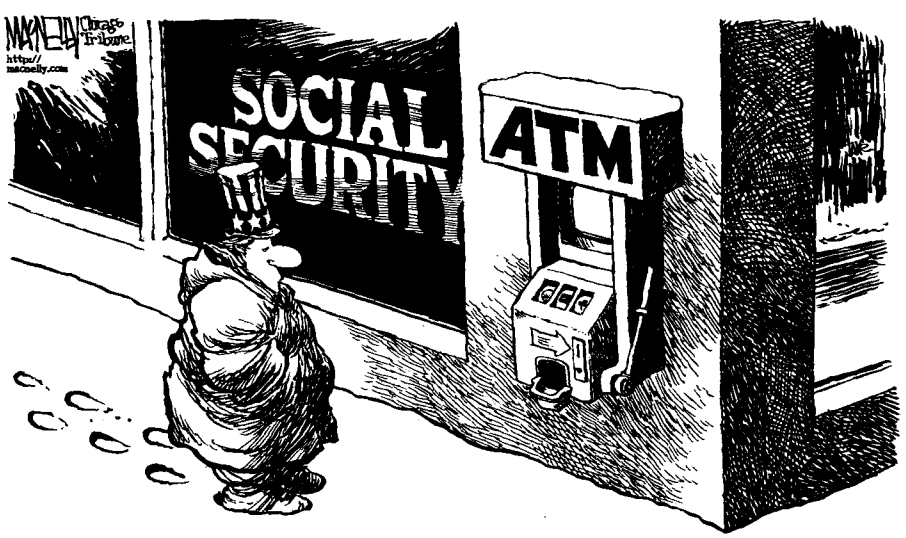
Even while going broke, Social Security will be unable to give today's workers a decent return. That's a political problem for a welfare program disguised (by FDR) as an insurance plan. Workers officially pay 6.2 per cent of their wages as "contributions" to Social Security. (Actually they pay more: the matching "employer's contribution" comes directly from wage funds. Without these taxes, take-home pay would be about 13.2 per cent higher than it is.) They therefore feel entitled to benefits they have "paid for." In fact, benefits paid out are only loosely related to taxes paid in, which are mostly spent immediately. Retirees today are receiving much more than they ever put in; previous generations made out even better. Workers today, however, are projected to get subzero returns.

Less noted is the way the system penalizes elderly people who continue to work; their loss of benefits constitutes a very high implicit tax. This penalty was deliberately designed into the system, based on the Depression-era theory that older workers were holding jobs that could go to the unemployed young, but it's a crazy policy for a rapidly aging population.

These trends have led Rep. Nick Smith (R., Mich.) to introduce a bill to privatize the system over a hundred years. Mark Sanford (R., S.C.) is working on a quicker proposal. Forbes's new "message tank," Americans for Hope, Growth, and Opportunity, is launching a campaign to promote privatization and the flat tax. Rep. Jim Kolbe (R., Ariz.), co-chairman of the House Public Pension Reform Caucus, is holding hearings on it around the country. He says, "1999 is the year to pass something."

To say that the prospect of privatization alarms liberals would be an understatement. They are mounting a furious counter-offensive, so far mostly in print media. They see no "crisis" looming: the Social Security trust fund isn't projected to be depleted until 2029. They say minor fixes have worked before and would keep Social Security solvent indefinitely. The "crisis," they charge, is being manufactured by Wall Street to justify "the most unbelievable rip-off of the century" (James Ridgeway, the *Village Voice*), "an attempted bank heist" that would "rob the American people of a perfectly good social insurance program for ideology and profit" (Trudy Lieberman, *The Nation*).

The vaunted trust fund, alas, exists only on paper; or, as the privatizers like to say, there's no trust and no fund. The government uses the Social Security sur-



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plus (this year's payroll taxes minus this year's benefits) to finance the budget deficit and fills the fund with IOUs. This is less outrageous than it sounds: would it make sense for someone going deeply into debt to comfort himself by piling up savings in another account? In any case, the surplus won't go on forever: by 2012 at the latest, benefits will exceed payroll taxes and Social Security will start exacerbating the federal deficit rather than ameliorating it. Then the government will be faced with the same three choices—raise tax revenues, cut benefits, or borrow more—it would face if the trust fund did not exist. Which, again, it basically doesn't.

PRIVATIZATION opponents count on the trust fund when they claim that adding only 2.3 percentage points to the tax now would ensure solvency. Credible estimates suggest that payroll taxes would have to double or treble to make the numbers balance, assuming the economy didn't collapse under the burden. Besides, "minor" tax hikes have been tried dozens of times in Social Security's history. These measures have pushed back the projected day of reckoning, but another bailout of the system has always proved necessary. In eight of the last ten years, the projected date of insolvency has been brought forward. Steve Forbes says, with some exasperation, "They always tell you, 'This is the last time we have to do it.' Carter told us that. In the early Eighties they told us that. Now Moynihan and others are saying change the CPI and everything will be fine. . . . If you have diseased tissue, cut it out and get on with it."

If defenders of the status quo underestimate the solvency problem, they overlook another problem entirely: the extremely low, and probably negative, return it gives today's workers on their tax "contributions." The true cost of the system is the "opportunity cost": the return workers could get if they invested that money themselves. Some proposed solutions to the solvency problem—raising taxes, cutting future benefits, raising the retirement age—would make the return even worse.

A fix favored mainly by neoliberals is "means-testing": cutting or eliminating benefits for retirees above a certain income or wealth threshold. The main opponents of means-testing come from points further Left. Critics fear that means-testing would undermine "social solidarity" (read: reduce public support for Social Security by exposing it as a welfare program). Means-testing proposals are popular, says opinion researcher Karlyn Bowman of the American Enterprise Institute, because people "don't think it will apply to them." Unless the threshold were set low, however, means-testing wouldn't raise much money. The potential of means-testing to skew economic incentives—it would act as an implicit tax on wealth creation—is also worrisome.

For conservatives, the most worrisome proposal is one endorsed by a faction of the Social Security Advisory Council and touted by Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D., S.D.), Sen. Bob Kerrey (D., Neb.), and Rep. Gerald Solomon (R., N.Y.): let the government invest Social Security funds. That way the government assumes all the risks, the program stays redistributive, and the money managers don't get a cut. The main drawback is that the Federal Government's investment decisions would inevitably be politicized. Steve Forbes asks, "Can you tell me in an election year they wouldn't say divest this, get out of this business? Shares of Phillip Morris? It's too easy a target. . . . And then, too, they would say, Well there are some social invesments you should make." Such manipulations would lower returns while extending government control over the economy.

The question of who should control investment decisions, the government or individuals, is one of the most contentious in the debate. Michael Tanner, head of the Cato Institute's Project on Social Security, says Sen. Kerrey "should get a medal for hero of the revolution" in Social Security politics, then adds, "He and I have had a shouting match on this in his office." Says Ed Crane, president of Cato, "I would rather keep the current system than have government invest these funds." Rep. Sanford calls the proposal "an absolute nonstarter."

Here, then, are the main arguments against privatization:

It will hurt the poor. That's President Clinton's stated grounds for opposing privatization. This argument relies on the assumption that Social Security is progressive. The benefit structure is, but the tax isn't. Moreover, poor people tend to start working earlier and have lower life expectancies than the affluent, and so they pay in for a longer time and draw benefits for a shorter time. A Rand Corporation study last year found a lifetime transfer from blacks to whites of $10,000. (Maybe there *is* a case for racial reparations.) The system is arguably regressive now; it would become undoubtedly so if payroll taxes were raised.

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The stock market is risky. Not compared to the current subzero return it isn't. Under conservative estimates of market returns, a privatized system would generate almost three times as many benefits as the current system. As Tanner notes, "There's never a twenty year period in American history when you lose money in the stock market." Adam Dubitsky, who runs a pro-privatization PAC called Fund for a New Generation, argues, "To say it's risky is like saying we can't get into life rafts from the *Titanic* because they may not be perfect." Also, there are ways to manage the risks with minimum guaranteed benefits and reinsurance.

The market is risky, take two. A more sophisticated version of the market-perils argument, advanced by no less than Alan Greenspan, is that privatization would simply shuffle assets unproductively. Stock-market returns, while high right now, will fall with the infusion of new funds, while government borrowing costs would rise. This argument resembles static analysis of tax cuts. "There's not a limited number of stocks with so much money chasing them," says Tanner. "Stocks aren't things, they're conduits for capital, so you'll have more stocks, new investments, new business opportunities." Investment flows follow valuations, not vice versa. As for borrowing costs, economist Lawrence Kudlow says, "The government-securities market is a fiercely competitive global market with about one and a half trillion dollars a day in transactions. Social Security flows are a pea in that pod, a kernel of corn in that field, and would have no impact."

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It's expensive. Yes and no. *Any* transition from a pay-as-you-go system to a fully funded pension plan would have costs of roughly the same magnitude. Debt, tax revenue, or both would have to go up because one generation is being asked to pay for its parents' retirement while saving up for its own. Privatization doesn't increase the costs. Look at it this way: the feds have already assumed the liability for paying these costs. Privatization simply shifts debt incurred through time; and over a long enough period, there would be, at the worst, no net change in total debt.

Privatization is a shell game. If privatization doesn't increase costs as a matter of logic, the flip side is it doesn't cut them either. In *Slate,* Michael Kinsley argues that the so-called transition problem is the whole problem, and privatization is irrelevant to it. If we had the money to finance the transition to privatization, we wouldn't have a fiscal problem in the first place.

This argument contains a germ of truth. Unless deficits are to reach astronomical levels, hard choices have to be made about spending. While privatizers don't deny that, they do tend to soft-pedal it. Those choices will be made easier, however, if privatizers are right about the potentially massive return from investing funds—and respected Harvard economist Martin Feldstein estimates the net present value of the gain in the range of $10 to $20 *trillion*. Longtime Social Security critic Peter Ferrara has a plan that, even without counting its effects on economic growth, generates net surpluses within two decades. And that's without raising taxes and with cutting spending by only $60 billion, or 4 per cent of the budget, each year for 12 years. (He would also raise the retirement age and tinker with benefit formulas.)

SOME attacks on privatization have come from quarters proponents hadn't been expecting. In a *New York Times* op-ed piece, Family Research Council president Gary Bauer politely cast doubt on the merits of privatization. His objections are driven largely by frustration with what he regards as economic conservatives' unwillingness to work as hard for social conservatives' objectives as vice versa. He is, however, justified in his concerns about possible payroll-tax hikes. The most free-market faction of the Advisory Council endorsed a temporary 20 per cent payroll tax increase, with "temporary" defined as seventy years (!), and even the famously anti-tax *Wall Street Journal* has editorialized favorably about raising the payroll tax to facilitate privatization. Yet privatization doesn't have to involve tax increases, according to Forbes and Ferrara. Forbes rejects such a tax hike as "a disaster."

Bauer's thinking reflects the influence of conservative activists Jeff Bell and John Mueller, who have long supported Social Security because its "homemaker's benefit" and "widow's benefit" redistribute money to women who stayed out of the labor force based on their husbands' benefits. "It's the last remaining institution in America that's pro-family," says Bell. (Bell is working for Bauer's new American Renewal PAC, and Bell and Mueller's firm is doing consulting work for the Committee to Preserve Social Security.) As with many analyses of Social Security, the focus on its internal transfer payments obscures its overall effects. Single-earner households will make smaller gains then dual-

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earner households under privatization, but they are still credibly projected to get twice as much as now. And that certainly would provide enough money for young couples to purchase life and disability insurance.

Allan Carlson, president of the Rockford Institute, has elaborated a strong social-conservative case *against* Social Security. Statist pension plans, he points out, disrupt traditional arrangements whereby parents "invest" in children, who in turn provide for them in old age. Social Security doesn't sever this intergenerational link but socializes it: the program needs population growth to work well, but it allows adults to take a "free ride" on the backs of other people's children. Hence what Carlson calls the "demographic contradiction" of the welfare state: it suppresses the fertility rate it needs to sustain itself. This tendency is well documented and was indeed foreseen by the Swedish Social Democrats Alva and Gunnar Myrdal in the early 1940s.

The economic case and the social case against Social Security aren't wholly compatible. Economic conservatives tend to condemn the notion of intergenerational wealth transfers, whereas social conservatives' support for such transfers logically leads to a more radical rejection of the whole idea of mandatory savings. Still, Carlson believes that privatization could bolster the family as long as individual accounts were fully owned, heritable, and divisible by heirs. The potential for "a new sort of patrimony" to link generations within a family leads him to conclude that a "privatized Social Security system should be a central theme of any true 'family values' platform in the future."

Bauer has not declared blanket opposition to privatization. Privatizers can address his legitimate concerns and dispel his unfounded ones. His political case against privatization will be harder to refute. It's reasonable to ask whether congressional Republicans have been so successful with Medicare that they should now try to undo the New Deal for an encore. But what's the alternative? The Bauer–Bell–Mueller troika suggests a "modest downsizing" of the system: raise the retirement age, cut payroll taxes, and cut future benefits. The incrementalism of that package should appeal to conservatives.

Yet the political futility of trying to reform Social Security that way is precisely what led free-marketeers to propose privatization. Ferrara asks, "If Bauer's concerned about payroll taxes now, what does he think is going to happen to them if the system is left on auto-pilot?"

The privatizers have some momentum behind them. By focusing on structural reform rather than short-term budget savings, they're avoiding one mistake of last winter's Medicare fight. Moreover, the idea of injecting "choice" into the system is popular with voters, says pollwatcher Mrs. Bowman, even if the word "privatization" isn't. The notion that there's no Social Security crisis isn't selling on Capitol Hill, and many opponents of privatization are relying on their core philosophical argument: that economic individualism corrodes national unity. "I think it's a debate that we win," says Tanner. "I think Americans are going to be baffled by the idea that we should all accept subzero returns to express our social solidarity."

The privatization of Social Security would transform American political culture as much as its creation did. The notion of a nation of shareholders appeals to conservatives. Still, privatizers shouldn't let their reformist zeal lead to overconfidence. Rep. Sanford's speculation that the way Social Security robs black Americans might lead many Democrats to support privatization seems hopelessly naïve, for instance. As Dubitsky says, "The Social Security debate is going to make the Medicare debate look like a walk in the park." □

Legal Lawbreaking

The American Bar Association is a friend to lawyers and an enemy to the law.

JOHN O. MCGINNIS

THE rule of law is one of the greatest goods a society can enjoy. Private law in the form of rules concerning property and contracts perfects the market by assuring that promises are kept and the fruits of labor protected. Public law in the form of constitutions and administrative procedures provides an enduring framework for government, empowering it to supply public goods that the market cannot. Finally, by reducing the level of uncertainty in our dealings with one another, the rule of law generates wealth more pervasively than any technological invention in history.

Unfortunately, one of the greatest obstacles to maintaining the rule of law is the profound interest that lawyers have in subverting it. As legal rules become less clear, more litigation is necessary to clarify them, resulting in higher income for lawyers. When rules are changed frequently clients must consult lawyers more frequently to understand their legal responsibilities. Thus in any society, lawyers are potentially enemies of the rule of law.

Because of the especially important role law and lawyers have had in America, lawyers here have a greater capacity for inflicting damage than in some other places. In fact, the American Bar Association, America's foremost collection of lawyers and the largest professional association in the world, is already a caricature of what a trade association of lawyers is always in danger of becoming. In most of its operations it continually undermines the rule of law by taking actions to make the law less clear and stable and by extending the reach of law into inappropriate realms.

The ABA's manner of accomplishing these objectives is characteristic of professional guilds through the ages: it presents to the public an image of apolitical expertise in the service of the public interest, but then uses that image as a cloak behind which to advance its own interests. These interests now include not only the parochial interests of acquiring more money and status for lawyers but the partisan interests of the Democratic Party as well. The objectives of the professional class that has most benefited from the welfare and

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regulatory state of the twentieth century have come largely to converge with the political party that is the main force behind sustaining that regime.

For instance, the ABA's criminal-law agenda is dedicated to preserving the worst excesses of the Warren Court. The ABA has opposed abolishing the exclusionary rule. In the last Congress it tried to block the habeas-corpus reform which attempted to return the writ to some semblance of its historical origins. It also denounced recent legislation that limited remedies in prison litigation to those required to rectify constitutional violations. It has even opposed mandatory minimum sentences. These policy recommendations all have two social consequences in common: they make society less safe, and they generate more work for lawyers.

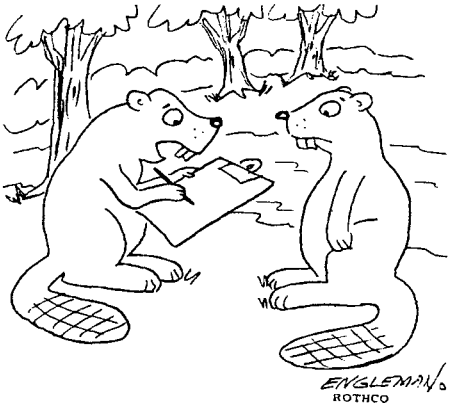
The ABA has also taken positions on civil law for self-serving reasons. It has opposed reform in the fields of medical malpractice and product liability because the expansion of tort law in the last four decades is one of the greatest sources of income for lawyers. Until 1994 it supported a single-payer health plan, and it still supports government programs that would guarantee universal access to health care.

The ABA's positions on health care illustrate a more general truth: because lawyers now benefit from guiding individuals through the maze of the regulatory state, the ABA tends to favor confining the operation of the market and aggrandizing the state wherever possible. To be sure, marketplace transactions generate some legal work, but the market is to a substantial degree self-regulating: concern for reputation disciplines behavior more than rules in most instances. Moreover, the common-law rules of contract that regulate the market have remained relatively constant, allowing the general citizenry to assimilate them. On the other hand, the scope for legal business is much enlarged as more and more areas of productivity are subject to that centralized control of the regulatory state in every detail and as the details are never settled but subjected to endless revision by lobbyists and administrative litigation. The administrative state is in fact government of lawyers, by lawyers, and for lawyers, and once it is instituted lawyers make sure that it does not easily perish.

Most notoriously among its public positions, the ABA has officially proclaimed support for a constitutional right to abortion. While this position may not at first glance seem to advance lawyers' pecuniary interests, it does reflect more generally their profile as a class that has come to live off the regulatory state. The jurisprudence of abortion is the abortion of jurisprudence: a court that can invent a right of such breathtaking enormity with no shred of support in the text or history of its constitution is a court of such unrestrained will as to be capable of almost anything. Locating such plenary power in the national judicial system in turn makes lawyers more powerful because they become the experts in influencing the discretionary judicial decisions that have become central to the governance of all areas of human activity.

Second, the ABA's support for abortion rights is an example of the moral permissiveness characteristic of classes whose income largely derives from manipulating the rules of the state. Courtiers have historically been more given to license than merchants because they depend less than merchants on a reputation for respectability and prudence.

NO ONE individual better symbolizes the mixture of partisan and guild interests involved in sustaining judicial activism than the president-elect of the ABA, Jerome Shestack. An active supporter in 1987 of the presidential candidacy of Joe Biden, who was then chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Shestack was on the Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary charged by the ABA with evaluating judicial nominees. It is widely reported that it was Shestack who, along with three other members, rated Judge Bork—a nominee whom Biden vociferously opposed—as unqualified to be a member of the Supreme Court. While the committee's standard for evaluating judicial nominations focuses ostensibly on "professional competence, integrity, and judicial competence," the standards, as the Bork nomination showed, are a façade behind which the committee members can employ their own ideological litmus test. Indeed, the committee members' subversion of these neutral standards perfectly mirrors the actions of the Justices of whom they do approve—jurists who make ideological decisions and then dress them in the constitutional language they have corrupted.



"I miss the old days when you could build a dam without filling out an environmental impact statement."

The ABA's support for abortion rights is an example of the moral permissiveness of classes whose income largely derives from manipulating the rules of the state.

The ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has also been hostile to lower-court judges who favor clear rules and limited government. For many years it has evaluated all lower-court nominees as Well Qualified, Qualified, or Not Qualified and presented these ratings to the Senate Judiciary Committee. As Washington lawyer Daniel Troy has demonstrated, the committee consistently rates nominees predisposed to judicial restraint less favorably than it does activists. For instance, Laurence Silberman of the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals had served at higher levels of government and had far more years of legal experience than his colleague Patricia Wald, but Judge Wald was rated Well Qualified and Judge Silberman Qualified/Not Qualified. Frank Easterbrook, a Reagan appointee, was rated Qualified/Not Qualified while Karen Nelson Moore, a Clinton appointee, was rated Qualified/Well Qualified—and yet Professor Easterbrook by any standard was a far more important and creative scholar than Professor Moore. In perhaps the most outra-

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geous rating of all, Richard Posner, the University of Chicago polymath, was assessed as Qualified/Not Qualified, although even Justice Brennan conceded that Judge Posner was one of the only two geniuses in law that he had ever met.

The ABA is so obsessed with sustaining judicial imperialism that it is now moving to disparage any questioning of its legitimacy. It has established a commission to protect "judicial independence" by denouncing criticism of judges. A prime example of criticism deemed dangerous by the ABA was the widespread condemnation of Judge Harold Baer for suppressing evidence on the grounds that it was reasonable for citizens in some parts of New York City to fear police and therefore to flee from them. For those who have come to depend on an all-powerful judiciary for much of their status and income, criticism of a judge is now regarded simply as an act of *lèse majesté*.

THE ABA also attempts to raise its income through the manner in which it oversees the regulation of the legal profession. Through its Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility, it has suggested model rules that under the veneer of advancing the public good attempt at every turn to insulate established lawyers from competition. Most obviously anti-competitive among these ethical rules are those against the "unauthorized practice of law." This rule has historically been deployed to prevent laymen from offering services more cheaply than lawyers. Another prohibition precluding non-lawyers from earning profit in connection with legal practice prevents new law firms from selling shares to the public to raise capital. Thus the ethics rules make it more difficult for new firms to form and compete against firms already in practice.

It is true that legal-ethics rules do contain some prohibitions that at first glance seem to cut against the pecuniary interest of lawyers, such as the rule against charging excessive fees. But as my colleague Lester Brickman has demonstrated, the Ethics and Professional Responsibility Committee guts such rules through strategic interpretative opinions. For instance, the committee recently interpreted this rule as permitting lawyers to charge standard contingent fees—a mechanism ostensibly designed to shift the risk of litigation from the client to the lawyers—even when there was no substantial risk involved in the litigation.

What can be done about the corrosive power of the American Bar Association? There are two plausible kinds of responses. The first is a matter for conservatives in public office to take up. They should use every opportunity, including public hearings, to expose the ABA for what it has become—an avaricious trade organization—and they must refuse to give it a privileged position in governmental processes. Presidents have historically provided the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary with access to information about potential nominees so that it can vet them. The next Republican presidential candidate should promise to end this practice. In the interim the Senate Judiciary Committee should start refusing the ABA the special status of testifying on nominees in advance of other concerned citizens. The ABA's past performance has shown that it brings a predictable partiality rather than a particular expertise to the process.

The other key step is grassroots organizing. Conservative and libertarian lawyers should join legal organizations of a conservative and libertarian ideology, which will prevent their transformation into a fifth column acting against the rule of law. One such organization—the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy—is already available and is now organizing itself into sections divided into particular practice areas on the model of the ABA. By strengthening this organization, conservative and libertarian lawyers can weaken the ABA's monopoly on representing the official opinion of lawyers. When groups like the Federalist Society have punched holes in the ABA's arguments about law and legal institutions a certain number of times, the ABA will lose its patina of professional respectability. The ruin of the ABA's reputation will be the beginning of the restoration of the rule of law in America. □

Emerging Russia

Although special-interest groups in Russia now have the upper hand, democracy is spreading its roots. Slowly.

ADRIAN KARATNYCKY

WHAT kind of country is Russia? The question is not academic.

If Russia is now a democracy with a market economy, a major factor in the stability of the new world order has been assured. The investment of tens of billions of dollars in U.S. and Western aid and loans has begun to bear fruit. Russia's democratic transformation is ensured no matter what happens to President Boris Yeltsin.

But if Russia is not a free-market democracy but a corporatist state run by a *nomenklatura* representing the interests of industry, finance, agriculture, and energy, if it is governed by a new anti-Western and pro-imperial consensus, then we must prepare for a complex, dangerous world.

Mr. Karatnycky is the President of Freedom House.

The Russian future is still far from clear. On the domestic front, Russia has made significant progress in the five years since the USSR's collapse. But there are troubling signs that something is amiss. Despite reforms, the Russian economy has not experienced the kind of turnaround that has occurred in most of the countries of Central Europe. Russia's economic output has declined for the fifth consecutive year, while—in violation of normal free-market rules—the official unemployment rate is a little over 3 per cent.

What explains this paradox? According to Andrei Illarionov, a reformer who was principal economic advisor to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin until 1994: "It's Russia's government, not its economy, that has been privatized." That is, government posts are used to create great personal wealth for the former Communist *nomenklatura*

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and to perpetuate the dominance of monopolies and oligopolies in key Russian industries. For example, the new rich include media moguls, who were granted privileged access to government-owned airwaves; financial groups, which built their wealth on the ability to borrow money at highly profitable rates from the state bank; and leaders of the raw-materials and energy sectors, who were allowed to take ownership of Russia's immense wealth of natural resources. As a result, Russia's economy is rewarding not the most entrepreneurial, but the best-connected.

These powerful financial and industrial groups are also stifling democratic development. Russian political scientist Liliya Shevtsova asserts that most of Russia's Communist *nomenklatura* was never toppled from power. Instead, she notes, a "new-model *nomenklatura*" at first made common cause with democratic reformers and later used its place within the government to "consolidate its primacy on the basis of state power." In time, with its power now ratified through a privatization it controlled, this ruling class widened its influence in the government at the expense of anti-Communist reformers, who were pushed to the sidelines.

THUS, it doesn't matter whether Boris Yeltsin is at heart a reformist democrat or a statist hardliner. He is, today, a prisoner of these powerful interests, which control many of the levers of state power. For example, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin served as chairman of the energy monopoly Gazprom. Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Potanin is founder of the Uneximbank. The new deputy national security secretary, Boris Berezovsky, made his fortune through the sale of foreign automobiles to Russia's new rich, later, with the help of the Yeltsin administration, becoming a leading shareholder in Russian public television.

While Russia's executive branch is dominated by the financial and raw-materials elites, other interests that have done less well out of the breakup of the old order are seeking to enhance their role in government, among them the military–industrial complex. This group has suffered from the deep reductions in state spending on security. It has a keen interest in making common cause with Russian nationalists and neo-imperialists, who are striving for Russia's revival as a great military power.

There are plenty of potential allies from whom the military and its industrial counterpart can choose. The economic elite, made up primarily of Soviet-era managers, is not reconciled to the independence of the former Soviet republics and endorses a new "union" of states. The Communist Party remains influential and has shown substantial durability by adopting a revanchist ideology that seeks to revive the former Soviet empire. Many reformers—including such leaders as Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov—also support the political reunification of the former Soviet republics. While there are many deep differences within Russia's elite on economic policy, there are few disagreements among centrist reformers, Communists, and the economic *nomenklatura* on questions of foreign and security policy.

The consensus on foreign and security policy that binds the ruling elite and the Communist opposition is reflected in the appointments President Yeltsin has made since his re-election last summer. Named to a new tour of duty as justice minister is a former Communist parliamentarian, and the new minister for relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States is an ally of Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

A new foreign-policy doctrine subscribed to by virtually every group across the Russian political spectrum is now being implemented. That doctrine seeks to exert dominion over neighboring states, often at the expense of Russia's own stability and economic growth. Just five months after former KGB operative Yevgeny Primakov took over the reins of the Foreign Ministry, *Nezavisimaya Gazcta* (the Moscow newspaper backed by Boris Berezovsky) published a provocative essay titled, "Theses on the Union." The document asserted that the breakup of the USSR was not in the economic interests of the former Soviet republics and advocated a concerted effort to promote political, economic, and security integration through peaceful means. The document's importance was underscored by the prominence and range of its authors, who represent a broad spectrum of the Russian elite, and include Presidential Council member Sergei Karaganov; parliamentarians Aleksei Arbatov, of the Yabloko party, and Irina Khakamada, a free-market advocate; former Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, a Yeltsin ally; Russia's new ambassador to Ukraine, Yuri Dubinin; Yuli Kvitsinsky, Soviet arms-control negotiator; and Ivan Rybkin, now secretary of Russia's National Security Council.

While pragmatically admitting that the USSR cannot be revived, the document asserts that a new economic, political, and security reintegration of the former Soviet republics is desirable. To reach this goal, "it is necessary to plan and implement a long-term strategy . . . aimed at alleviating the negative consequences of the collapse for Russians first of all and for the inhabitants of other countries of the former USSR."

The document recommends aiding

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the economic development of Russian minorities in neighboring countries, calls for funds to support exchanges with political and cultural elites of neighboring states, and endorses the continuation of Russian broadcasting to neighboring states—all as means of influencing hearts and minds in favor of reintegration. The document also provides a step-by-step blueprint for reintegration, beginning with close Russian–Belarussian and Russian–Kazakhstani economic, military, and political integration, which would make it "more and more difficult for Ukrainian leaders to explain to their population the advantages of the policy of self-isolation of Kiev."

With their presence in the Russian government, insiders use state intervention to maintain subsidies, establish privileges, and strangle potential competitors.

The authors conclude: "it is theoretically possible, and the objective preconditions are coming together for the building of a truly federative union of states on the ruins of the disintegrated state." Such a federation would be built on an infrastructure of a customs union, a regional development bank, unified television and radio broadcasting, and a "system of collective security" within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

THE consensus document closely resembles the policies of Foreign Minister Primakov, who has sought to enhance Russian influence in neighboring states with scant regard for the domestic political consequences. This can be seen most vividly in Belarus, where, over the last 18 months, Russia has built up the prestige of the country's authoritarian president, Aleksandr Lukashenko. The increasingly tyrannical Lukashenko, who supports the reintegration of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus into a political and economic union, is given widespread publicity in the Russian media. And while, privately, Russia's leaders may have little regard for the buffoonish Lukashenko, they view his firm adherence to reintegration as reason enough for support. Russia has offered Lukashenko financial assistance (forgiving Belarus a $1.2-billion debt) and political approval (signaled by regular meetings with key Russian leaders). Such support has strengthened his hand and emboldened him in his efforts to impose a personal dictatorship.

Another focal point of Russia's efforts to reassert hegemony is Ukraine. In the five years since the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of independent Ukraine, President Yeltsin has never visited Kiev. Instead, Russia has sought to prolong a dispute over the division of the Black Sea Fleet and the stationing of Russian forces on Ukrainian territory. In December 1996, Russia's Federation Council, in which allies of President Yeltsin predominate, went further and adopted a resolution declaring Sevastopol, a port city on Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, an integral part of Russia. The resolution passed by an overwhelming majority, confirming the broad spectrum of support that territorial claims against Ukraine enjoy within the Russian political elite.

Foreign Minister Primakov's effort to enhance Russia's influence abroad can also be seen in the warming of relations with former client states, including such rogue powers as Cuba, Syria, and Iraq. Now Russia's military and civilian leaders make regular pilgrimages to Cuba without thinking of a stop in the United States. Even as Russia takes our aid and benefits from U.S.-backed loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, it seeks to lift sanctions against Iraq, export nuclear technology to Iran, and sell its most modern military aircraft to an increasingly nationalistic China. The official Russian position on NATO alternates between hostility and belligerence.

In an interview with the Russian newsweekly *Novoye Vremya*, former Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev charged that, gradually but inexorably, the conduct of Russian foreign policy under President Yeltsin has been drifting into the hands of the KGB. Primakov, who replaced Kozyrev as Foreign Minister in January 1996, had been the head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service and is suspected of having been an agent of the Soviet-era KGB.

Kozyrev's revelations about his years alongside President Yeltsin provide a glimpse into the forces shaping Russia's foreign and security policies. Kozyrev speaks of troubling trends at Russia's political heights and suggests that a strong anti-Western lobby has taken over the rudder. He notes that today "the information that reaches [President Yeltsin] paints the world in false colors. Efforts are made to convince the President that there is a cabal against Russia, that we are everywhere encircled by enemies." In 1991–92, with the KGB in disarray, it was possible for Russia to work side by side with the United States in a cooperative fashion on key international policies. But by 1993, with the power of the KGB growing, Kozyrev reports: "I tried to make sure that the tiny stream of information from the Foreign Ministry differed significantly from the flood of information [from security services]—and I lost."

Kozyrev suggests that the security services, Russia's successors to the KGB, have emerged virtually unreformed despite the collapse of the Soviet system, and that they still regard the West as an ideological and geopolitical enemy. A chilling confirmation of this came on December 25 in a speech to the military cooperation headquarters of the Commonwealth of Independent States by Defense Minister Igor Rodionov, who called on CIS countries to create a military union to rival NATO. Rodionov denounced NATO expansion and named the countries that pose a "particular danger" to Russia. Topping the list was the U.S., which "seeks to ensure American global domination." Rodionov also denounced the West for fanning the flames of ethnic hatred in the former USSR in a bid to weaken Russia. And he declared that the other potential opponents of Russia were "Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Japan, and China."

Does all this matter? After all, with a gross national product about 7 per cent that of the NATO allies, can Russia really threaten vital U.S. interests?

There are some good reasons to worry. There is Russia's massive tactical and strategic nuclear capability, not seriously undermined by the various "arms-control" measures that have been taken. And there is Russia's conventional military power. Keep in mind the massive dislocations and refugee flows resulting from the conflict between the Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians. Together, their population and military capability is

(Continues on page 60)

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

February 1, 1997

Dear Rusty,

This is awkward.

Remember last year, when you were in town? You had come up from the research station down in Brazil for a few days, and you stopped by my office for a chat. Remember?

And then you said something like, "Gee, I wish the Institute could get some help from the government."

And then I said something like, "Well, like what kind of help?"

And then you said something like, "Tax help for some of our contributors, that kind of thing."

So we went down to the Map Room of the White House, where Bill was holding one of his coffees, and I steered you toward him and said, "Go ahead and ask, Rusty." Which you did.

Now, I can't remember exactly what the upshot was—whether you got the help or not—and to be honest, Rusty, it doesn't really matter. What matters is you had some coffee, maybe even a Danish or one of those crumbly sugar cookies, and, well, now here's the awkward part.

You didn't pay. I mean, that's kind of bad form, Rusty, and I hate to take you to task like this, but we're friends and I brought you to the Map Room, and so your behavior reflects on me and . . . well, I could go on and on, but suffice it to say that we'd all really appreciate getting a check for $50,000 as soon as possible.

Obviously, that would cover gratuity, parking, etc., anything you might have consumed, and anything you may have taken—pens, ashtrays, coffee cups, cookie plates, maps (it was in the Map Room, after all), whatever. I'm not trying to be insulting, Rusty, it's just that we had a lot of people in and out of those coffees, some of whom it turns out have extensive police records, some of them even outstanding arrest warrants, and so naturally we're missing some stuff. It's not personal, Rusty. It's strictly business.

As it stands, according to the White House database—Who Dat—you're 120 days past due. Who Dat is extremely fair: you're listed as "Past Due" only if it's been 30 days since your request has been executed—see there? We did help you out after all—and even then, interest doesn't start to accrue until after a 12-day grace period.

Who Dat is rarely wrong, Rusty. Let's face it: when the taxpayers pay for a computer system, it works! (Except at the IRS.) So if it says that you live in Brazil, are a "pers.frnd.VPOTUS," enjoy sea kayaking and Mexican food, and owe $50,000, well, guess what? You do.

Actually, the Who Dat system was a brainstorm of HRC's. She wanted what she called a "Big Sister" kind of thing. And although I've had my differences with HRC, I felt a twinge of jealousy that it was she and not Mr. Information Superhighway who came up with the idea.

Not that the whole thing hasn't caused a bit of trouble. When word leaked out about the Who Dat system, there was a firestorm of controversy. The press accused us of everything from compiling secret files to using tax money for partisan activities. To which we replied: Why should we compile secret files when we had the real stuff just a few doors down in Craig Livingstone's office? And if using tax funds for partisan activity is so bad, how come Newt Gingrich got away with it? (Admittedly, the latter point didn't hold up so well in our spin meeting. In the first place, Gingrich didn't really get away with it; and in the second, $300,000 is a lot of White House coffee.)

So, yes, there has been some political fallout, but the truth, Rusty, is that everyone around here pretty much has their eye on the ball—the ball being the '00 campaign. And the good news is that, thanks to pals like Marty Peretz and the New York Times, I'm regarded as "the most influential Vice President in history" and "Bill Clinton's most indispensable advisor." Gradually, the press has begun to give credit where credit is due in our Administration: I'm responsible for most of the good stuff, but none of the bad stuff. I'm in the loop, but not always. Put it this way: I saw a lot of Buddhists, but I didn't see any of them holding a checkbook.

I know it's a subtle distinction, but lucky for me, it's not too subtle for the Washington press corps.

Just a sec, Rusty . . . I've just received a cc: note from Lanny Davis, the White House Counsel. According to him, the status of that coffee that you attended has changed. It turns out that it wasn't at the White House, it wasn't a coffee, and you didn't attend it. Close one, huh?

I'll update Who Dat to read, "Paid in Full."

Your pal, Al

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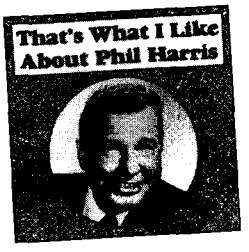

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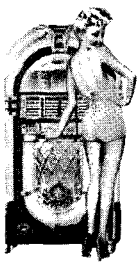

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by vandals in a rage,
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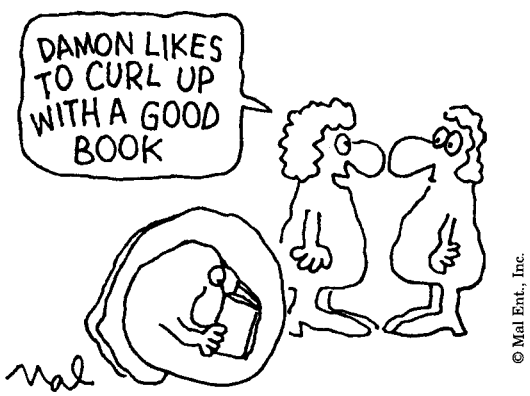
". . . and have you found that life on the reservation has changed much since you opened the casino, red cloud?"



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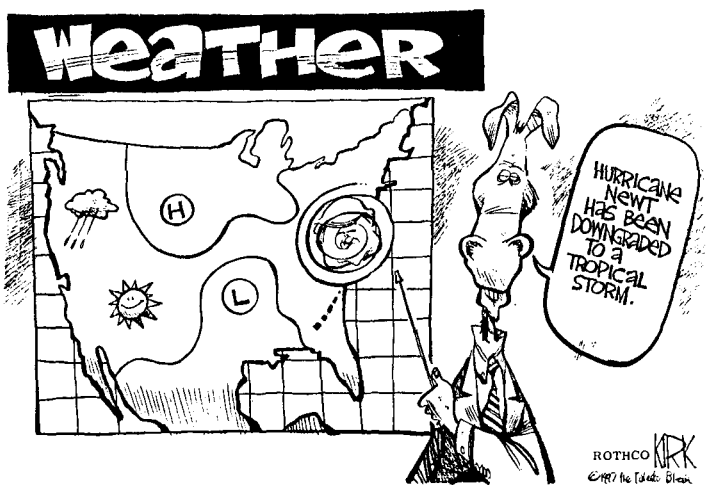

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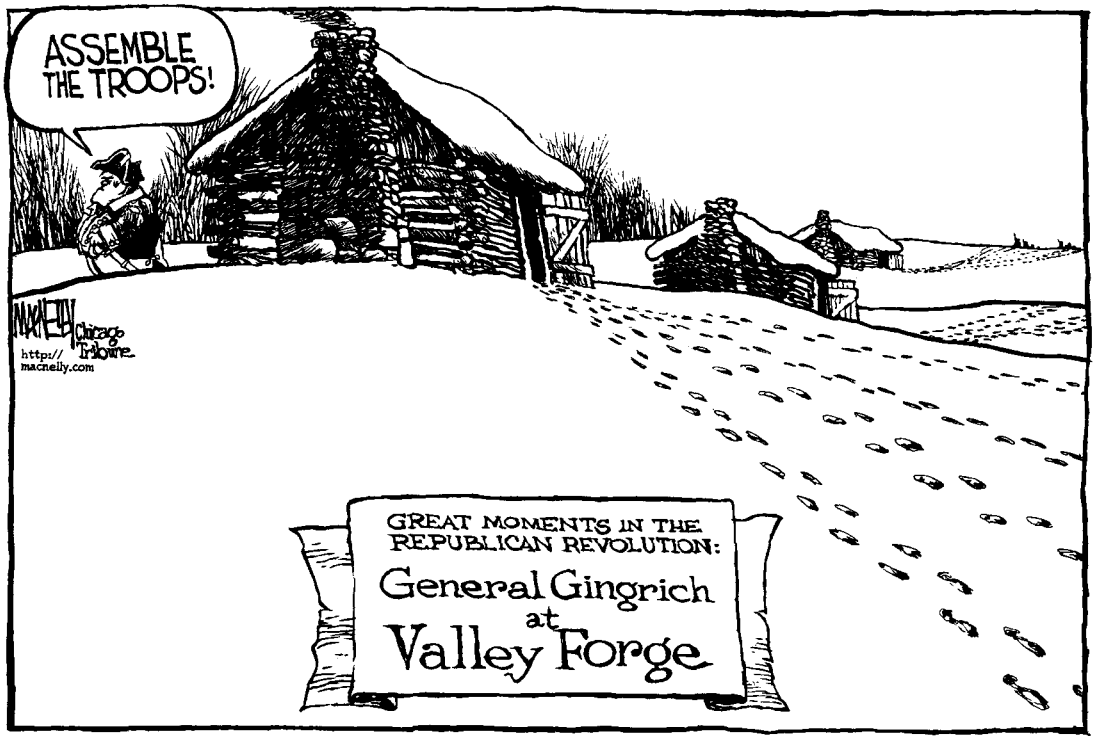

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Give Us Liberty

LOREN E. LOMASKY

"IT was born to the mainstream of Liberalism, became a bulwark of Radicalism, today is usually called Conservatism, but more accurately goes under a different title." If this were a *Jeopardy!* session and you offered up "What is Libertarianism?" you would earn Alex Trebek's benediction. If, however, another contestant beat you to the buzzer, you would do well to bone up with Charles Murray's vigorous and engaging *What It Means to Be a Libertarian.*

Last spotted in the company of Richard Herrnstein as co-author of *The Bell Curve*, Murray has been no stranger to controversy since his emergence into public view with *Losing Ground*. But this book is liable to generate more puzzlement than polemics. Old friends and foes alike will ask: Why on earth is Murray parading under the banner of libertarianism? Isn't that the political party that surfaces during each presidential cycle to capture something under one-half of 1 per cent of votes cast? Doesn't libertarianism give short shrift to the inculcation of virtue and community values, items that have always been central to Murray's concerns?

What It Means to Be a Libertarian: A Personal Interpretation, by Charles Murray (Broadway, 192 pp., $20)

The Libertarian Reader, edited by David Boaz (Free Press, 458 pp., $27.50)

Libertarianism: A Primer, by David Boaz (Free Press, 314 pp., $23)

Murray argues that, rather than being politically marginal for Americans, libertarianism is the conviction that spurred the nation's Founders. The inalienable rights affirmed by the Declaration of Independence bear a decidedly libertarian stamp; deconstruct him all you like, Patrick Henry cannot be construed as proclaiming, "Give me NEA subsidies or give me death!" In its inception this republic was conceived as a political order in which government is both strong and limited. As *The Federalist* observed, a state strong enough to act effectively for the common good can be kept from becoming despotic only if it is bound by tight cords that restrict its scope of permissible activity. Properly functioning, it maintains the rule of law, defends against external and internal aggressors, and arranges for the production of those few public goods that are generally valued by the citizenry but which will not be adequately provided via private activity. And that is *all*. Government so understood is fiercely protective of individuals' property rights, and, especially in the American version, it incorporates a principle of subsidiarity mandating that government functions are to be carried out at the most local feasible level.

Luba Kolomytseva

Murray also rejects the accusation that libertarians are indifferent to virtue. Rather, they believe that a society in which individual autonomy is respected, including especially the right freely to associate with (and dissociate from) whomsoever one pleases, is the political framework most conducive to individual responsibility. In a free society one fully bears the costs and reaps the benefits of one's choices. A welfare state spreads them across the populace. By taxing away gains it diminishes inducements to live productively, and by subsidizing improvident behavior it fatally undermines individuals' character and frays social bonds. Murray has made a career of cudgeling the Great Society and all its noxious spawn. Here he does not alter the details of the critique but rather embeds it more deeply in the cement of political philosophy: Make individuals less free and you will render them less virtuous; it's that simple.

Although few of our compatriots characterize their political views as libertarian, for many of them libertarianism is the default position. That is, they accept for the most part that so long as no one else is harmed, individuals should be let alone to make their own choices. Interference is justified only to achieve some major desideratum that would otherwise be forfeited. On the Left, egalitarian and social-justice considerations are invoked as justifying intrusions into the domain of private decision-making. On the Right these encroachments are more often supported in the name of keeping people from doing themselves physical or spiritual harm, and to preserve the moral underpinnings of civil society. Libertarianism must, therefore, post sentries on both flanks. Murray does a competent job of setting out policy analyses that blunt both thrusts, but the defense against the

Mr. Lomasky teaches philosophy at Bowling Green State University.

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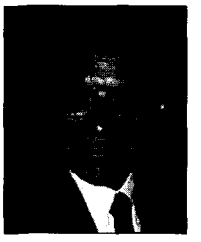
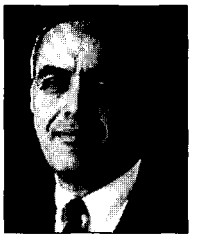

Milton Friedman

Robert Bork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BY ED SKIMO
National Review Alaska Cruise Correspondent

(New York: February 7) Add another star to the expanding constellation of conservative luminaries who will attend the ***National Review 1997 Alaska Cruise*** this August 10—17.

Gary Bauer, President of the Family Research Council, former top domestic policy aide to Ronald Reagan, and the man conservative insiders consider the *primo* "social issue" mover and shaker in Washington, will join Bill Buckley, Milton Friedman, Robert Bork, Robert Novak, Dan Lungren, Pat Sajak, and *National Review*'s heralded "A Team"– John O'Sullivan, Kate O'Beirne, Rick Brookhiser, Ed Capano, and Dusty Rhodes– for a week of conservative revelry along the glorious waterways of the "Land of the Midnight Sun."

In addition to the good news about Bauer's participation, *National Review*'s Office of Cruise Affairs now reports that Holland America Line–whose spectacular MS *Ryndam* will serve as the floating paradise for the magazine's Alaska voyage–has announced that it will give all passengers traveling in *National Review*'s contingent a $25 ship-board credit.

Cruise agents also report that nearly 160 cabins–including scores of nearly-sold-out "verandah" staterooms–have been reserved by *National Review* subscribers, their friends, and family members. With dozens of calls continuing to come in every day to the *National Review* Cruise Information Hotline, one travel official is now warning that "at this rate, *National Review*'s allotment of reserved staterooms will be sold out in a matter of weeks."

The ***National Review 1997 Alaska Cruise*** will feature six exlusive seminars on policy and politics (starring our special guests and *NR* editors), plus an array of social events, including three cocktail receptions and two late-evening "smokers" featuring world-class H. Upmann cigars and "top shelf" cognac. All of which will be enjoyed aboard Holland America's award-winning MS *Ryndam*, renowned throughout the cruise industry for its pampering service, superior cuisine, luxurious staterooms, exciting "shore excursions," and wonderful night-life activities.

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Until next time, this has been Ed Skimo, *National Review* Alaska Cruise Correspondent, reporting.

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Left reveals little that is new. Hayek's *Constitution of Liberty* is deeper, Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* more incisively pathbreaking, David Friedman's *Machinery of Freedom* more radical and programmatically consistent. The distinctive contribution of *What It Means to Be a Libertarian* is its proffered rapprochement to the Right.

Murray first acknowledges the dispositional conservatism that cautions against ballyhooed but untested nostrums. If we were to dismantle the entire regulatory and redistributive apparatus of the Federal Government, we would perhaps then experience an effulgence of prosperity and good feeling. *Perhaps*—but perhaps not. Accordingly, Murray does not insist on a cold-turkey transition to libertarianism. Are you worried that in the absence of governmental regulation the food you purchased in the supermarket would be contaminated, the medications you brought home from the pharmacy would be lethal, safety at your workplace would be imperiled? Murray's stipulation is elegantly pragmatic: retain the old regulatory apparatus for those companies and consumers who choose to transact business under its strictures while liberating those who find it oppressive. If it should prove that Ralph Nader was right after all and libertarians were wrong, then the regulatory octopus will still be there to welcome back chastened free-marketers who formerly scorned its embrace.

Patrick Henry cannot be construed as proclaiming, 'Give me NEA subsidies or give me death!'

Second, Murray believes that the primary constituency for transforming libertarianism from a theorist's fantasy into a politically potent movement is working- and middle-class social conservatives. They more than anyone else are shortchanged by the mega-state, bearing a substantial share of its burdens but receiving in return precious little acknowledgment of their values and aspirations. Just as Ronald Reagan shifted many from old Democratic loyalties into the Republican camp, so too can these citizens be led to conclude that the indicated response to a government that increasingly doesn't work is not endless tinkering around the edges but rather wholesale dismantling of big chunks. If, though, they are to be enlisted as allies, their anxieties must be addressed: What about drugs, pornography, crime? Murray candidly admits that in a freed-up society these phenomena would pose serious problems. That, however, hardly constitutes an indictment of the libertarian agenda. They are *already* rampantly pathological social scourges despite (or because of) tens of billions of dollars tossed in their direction by the Federal Government.

MURRAY believes that the auspices for libertarianism are good. Also anticipating a renewed burst of freedom for the twenty-first century is the Cato Institute's David Boaz. His *Libertarian Reader* is a wide-ranging collection of excerpts from dozens of classical and contemporary sources. The title is slightly awry; the authors certainly are not uniformly libertarian in anything like the sense in which Murray or Boaz himself employs the term. What do Adam Smith, Frederick Douglass, Ayn Rand, Lao Tzu, and the author of the Book of Samuel have in common? Not a political ideology surely, but rather an antipathy toward oppression and the conviction that in any decent society, men and women will be free to make their own mistakes and bear the consequences thereof. Anthologies are a dime a dozen, but this one imaginatively brings together the old and the new, the scholarly and the colloquial, classics and curios. For anyone remotely susceptible to libertarian blandishments there must be something here to whet the appetite.

Boaz's *Libertarianism: A Primer* might then serve as the next course. Its natural readership is the sons and daughters of Murray's audience. In tone it is breezy, iconoclastic, suspicious of establishments, but safely to this side of paranoia. If Boaz is going to err, he prefers to risk some measure of shallowness rather than ponderous pedantry. Libertarianism here is offered up as the politics of choice for those whose accustomed habitat is the unconstrained ambience of the campus, cyberspace, and the channel flicker. "Live and let live" seems like a useful motto to them regardless of whether it applies to ingesting one's preferred chemical or celebrating a 25th birthday by taking one's company public. If they get around to developing an interest in politics, they may find that they have been speaking libertarianism all their lives without knowing it.

Is Murray and Boaz's optimism justified? Is libertarianism likely to escape from the margins of the political periphery to a more central location? I am inclined to be less confident: no one ever went broke by overestimating the persistence of mediocrity within American electoral competitions. Nonetheless, the authors are persuasive when they identify in the nation's hallowed traditions as well as present-day sensibilities a prominent libertarian core. The prospects for the heralded renaissance can only be enhanced by the appearance of these intelligent, readable volumes. □

Secret War

A. J. BACEVICH

IN a long and distinguished career, Paul Fussell has achieved renown as teacher, literary critic, and author of pungent, self-consciously contrarious essays on contemporary American culture. But before all that he was—and in an important sense has remained—a soldier: a combat infantryman, a veteran of bitter fighting in Europe in World War II, permanently scarred by his intimate encounter with the brutality of combat and with the duplicity inherent in the way that nations organize themselves for modern war.

This immensely readable and unsparing memoir tells how that encounter transformed the 20-year-old "Boy Fussell"—a carefree naïf from comfortable if philistine pre-war Pasadena—into a famously irascible curmudgeon.

As a warrior-intellectual, Fussell is among the last of a breed. Ours has been an age steeped in bloodshed and savagery. Yet, as the twentieth century

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draws to a close, few of the chatterers who shape public opinion possess even a rudimentary grasp of war's reality. Describing an unscrupulous politician, Henry Adams wrote that "he talked about virtue as a man who is color-blind talks about red and green." So too with many of those who presume to instruct the citizenry on when and where to deploy the American military.

For Americans, basking in their nation's status as sole remaining superpower, this is a matter of considerable consequence. According to President Clinton, the United States is today the world's "indispensable nation." Indispensability impels the U.S. toward a policy of "engagement and enlargement"—to skeptics, euphemisms for hegemony. Achieving those objectives demands that the U.S. exercise "leadership"—to some, an invitation to hubris and overextension. Fulfilling the responsibilities of leadership has come to mean, in practice, that the U.S. relies increasingly on its world-dominant military forces to set the world right.

Doing Battle: The Making of a Skeptic, by Paul Fussell (Little, Brown, 320 pp., $24.95)

Thus, American writers and artists who know nothing of war denounce it as immoral and call for its eradication—but are quick to rally to the op-ed pages of the *New York Times* to demand the bombing of evil Bosnian Serbs or the invasion of Haiti. Professing their commitment to an enduring world peace, non-veteran politicians of various persuasions insist that dispatching American forces everywhere from the Persian Gulf to the Taiwan Straits will bring that goal within reach.

Long gone are the days of 1914–18 when a nation's best and brightest felt compelled to volunteer for the trenches—indeed, imagined in so doing that they were somehow ennobled. Gone too is the idealistic (if misguided) radicalism of the 1930s when intellectuals rushed to fight for the Spanish Republic. For decades now, efficiency in large-scale conflict has necessitated that the talented and able be diverted to ancillary tasks well removed from the front.

For Fussell, the gap between those who talk about wars and those who fight them has important implications. It contributes directly to the sentimentalization of past conflicts and the falsification of history. Much of Fussell's polemical writing amounts to a crusade against what he has described as the "higher Disneyfication" of war.

Few of the chatterers who shape public opinion possess even a rudimentary grasp of war's reality.

This purpose may explain the odd imbalance of Fussell's memoir. The author devotes fully one-third of *Doing Battle* to the brief period of 1943–46, the three years of his military service. Although Fussell describes his upbringing in "Luckyville"—the Pasadena of the 1920s and 1930s—and his carefree years attending Pomona College while awaiting induction, the grace and gently mocking humor distinguishing that portion of the narrative seem designed primarily to heighten the contrast with what is to follow. Indeed, the author recounts his military service in remorseless and thoroughgoing detail: his arduous and degrading passage through the bowels of the Army's huge and impersonal Stateside training establishment, his harrowing introduction to combat as a rifle platoon leader in Europe, his lengthy and painful recovery from wounds received in battle—followed by his mind-numbing reassignment, as soon as he was moderately fit, to a unit earmarked for the scheduled invasion of Japan, and the "make-work" routine to which the demobilizing Army reverted following V-J Day. By contrast, the several decades following the war—during which Fussell completed his education, carved out an academic career, married, raised a family, divorced, married again, and earned various honors—receive only perfunctory attention.

What sets Fussell apart from most

Mr. Bacevich is executive director of the Foreign Policy Institute at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. He served in the Vietnam War.

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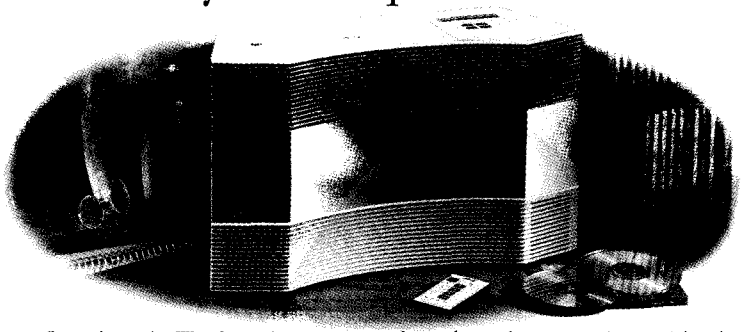

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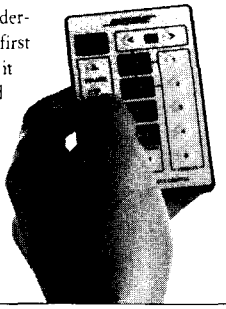

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other veterans is not his personal experience of combat but his refusal to consign that experience to the past. Indeed, despite the passage of a half-century, he cannot do so. "Boy Fussell" was gang-raped by war. In response to this violation, Fussell refuses adamantly to condone romanticizing war, waxing nostalgic about military service, or finding idealism where only vileness exists. Indeed, for Fussell, the problem goes beyond war itself to encompass the "atmosphere of public misrepresentation and fatuous optimism" pervading postwar America and a culture that has become "more than ever bellicose, ignorant, selfish, and greedy, shot through with quasi-religious fraud and hypocrisy."

That, in the waning moments of a century noted for institutionalized mayhem and carnage on a global scale, anyone should require admonitions about the evils inherent in war may seem positively surreal. But that such admonitions are very much in order, especially for Americans, is indisputable.

The recent resurgence in American adventurism, most notably but not exclusively the Gulf War, has given rise to a new militarism, reviving dangerous illusions that war can be clean, surgically precise, and nearly bloodless. Certain that we will not listen—that in the end "all human life is destined to failure"—Paul Fussell is among those who will persist in giving the lie to those illusions. Long may he rail. □

THE OPEN QUESTION

On American Words

HUGH KENNER

IN his review of *Buckley: The Right Word* (*NR*, Dec. 23), James Jackson Kilpatrick planted the false assumption that WFB's interest in verbal exotica is an aberration, nigh unique on this continent. That has long been a knee-jerk attitude among people who should know better. Back when I lived in Baltimore, regarded by the *Washington Post* as an accessible D.C. suburb, I would get occasional calls from one or another *Post* reporter in quest of comments on "Why Americans Have No Interest in Language."

One time I was able to riposte with an anecdote. *Harper's* had asked if I'd review some word-books they had had trickling in. I would? OK, they'd send them. And it took two men to lift the box of books off the mail truck. Books about words are an American sub-genre. No interest in language among the populace? Nonsense. Authors in this field even command personal publics, for whose pleasure publishers commission book after book.

A few of the books in that box were by William Safire; and note that Safire's word columns, which appear weekly in the Newspaper of Record and over the years have been collected into numerous volumes, focus by custom on one word at a time. That's exactly how you focus when you're spelling, and somewhere I've stashed a clipping from the *New York Times*, an authoritative letter on why it's only students of English who need spelling classes. It seems that in other European languages words are normally spelled as they're pronounced, though here it's the rough cough and the hiccough that must plough us through.

A nineteenth-century Nebraska ritual was to circulate to one another's parlors for an evening of, yes, spelling.

Still, however necessary attention to spelling may be, it needn't entail rituals the like of spelling bees. There's a story, documented, about folk in—was it Nebraska?—whose nineteenth-century ritual was to circulate weekend by weekend to one another's parlors for an evening of, yes, spelling. Imagine that in Sussex! No, it seems specifically North American. And why?

Well, a wonderful article by Michael West ("Spellers and Punsters," *Southwest Review*, Autumn 1987) derives the U.S. phenomenon from Noah Webster, whose blue-backed *Speller* "sold some 75 million copies throughout the nineteenth century." It was "perhaps the world's best seller after the Bible." For, as an *imported* language, English received from Webster a scrutiny it had not been accorded in England. Scrutiny discerned pedagogic chaos; nothing for that but drill. So students were "drilled relentlessly in long lists of three- and four-syllable words like *alcoran*, *parallax*, *sumptuary*, *apostasy*, and *empyreal*." We can imagine that "many written words first impinged on the juvenile consciousness as darkly mysterious phonetic formulae, to be savored syllabically, reverently pronounced, and related to other words if possible by similarities of sound."

True, "the process was almost comically inadequate for fostering mass literacy." Yet, "When the American Adam awoke to literary consciousness in the verdant garden of the Republic, its schools thus encouraged him to utter his first written words in a spirit of quasi-magical naming." (If words are just syllabic sequences like "abracadabra," well, what's to be made of the way such a sequence interacts with some non-linguistic object?) Emerson, in "The Poet," the most influential essay ever written on these shores (it prompted the *OED*, but that's another story) exalted the Namer, who, using each thing's "own name and not another's," can nourish "the intellect, which delights in detachment or boundary." That led to Ezra Pound, who intoned a Confucian wisdom of "calling things by their names," and delighted in naming them via Chinese, Greek, Latin. And en route to Pound, it induced Whitman, whose huge catalogues West rightly ascribes to a poet who thought of himself as "primal namer." What, after all, are Catalogues? It's easy to reduce them to just Lists of Words.

And Table LIII of Webster's *Speller* could save "from terminal boredom" a student who had "persevered to the end." Its five pages listed "Words of the same sound, but different in spelling

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and signification." Scanning it, you were prompted to think that you must *groan* until you're *grown*. As early as 1854 a man named Hill wrote in *Putnam's* magazine that bad puns derived from the spelling book, which confined attention "to syllables and to the cold relations between ideas they suggest." Hill was right about genesis, wrong about impulse. Puns abound wherever people are fluent in a language they sense is yet not quite theirs. In Jamaica, where excellent English abounds, you'll find a Sneakey Peach Road, likewise a shop for skin-divers' equipment called Lady G'Diver. In Ireland too they feel detached from the English they use constantly. One result: a quintessentially Irish book made of multi-thousands of multi-lingual puns. Its title? *Finnegans Wake*.

In nineteenth-century America, puns, passed from editor to editor, absorbed decades of attention. "Why is Noah Webster like the Devil? Because he takes you from our Saviour"—a word Webster insisted should be spelled minus the *u*. I don't claim such capers are witty; I do claim they illustrate a remarkable detachment from printed language. No longer a notation for speech, it's an assemblage of nigh arbitrary signs. That aligns it with "OK," which appeared among "a sportive group of young sparks as an abbreviation for the comically misspelled catchphrase *oll koreect*." Picked up in 1840 by "Tammany rowdies" who wanted to push the candidacy of Van Buren (known as *O*ld *K*inderhook), OK "swept the country and eventually the world."

Is the theme of all this evanescing as you read? I hope not; I'm seeking to offer a context for a North American interest in single, separate words. "Why is imprisonment like a person eating dinner in the rail cars?" asked an 1844 magazine. "Because it's in-cars-a-ration." Yes, bad; but "such jokes pleased an audience who had been relentlessly drilled in dividing words syllabically, then spelling them by sounding them out." And that led to the Spelling Bee, and to long Nebraska evenings, documented. All of which enjoys one apotheosis in Bill Buckley, not eccentric, no, *echt* American.

But *echt*, is that perchance American? Well, it's audible enough in America to be found in the 1983 Random House Unabridged, page 618, though they're careful to mark it "German." For no, you can't be too careful. □

Hustlers

JOHN SIMON

PLAINLY put, I find ***The People vs. Larry Flynt*** the best and most important American film of the year. It is the story of the publisher of *Hustler* magazine, not unlike the way it happened, save for the usual, near-inevitable cinematic embellishments. The magazine and its publisher being considered unsavory in most quarters, this presumed glorification of Flynt has aroused the ire of feminists, conservatives, and persons of exacting taste.

Glorification? Well, yes, whenever a real person is the protagonist of a major-studio biographical film, the presumption is that he or she is being celebrated, or at least dignified, by it. Were, then, all those old-time gangster movies about Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, and the rest cases of glorification? Fascination, rather: evil fascinates, especially when accompanied by courage, or at least audacity. If you add the prevalent sociological view, whereby the individual is innocent, and society is to blame, the moral issues become cloudier yet.

The movie under discussion, however, works on several levels. It is first a First Amendment tale about what led to Flynt's winning his case against the Moral Majority's Jerry Falwell in the United States Supreme Court, with Chief Justice Rehnquist himself writing the decision. The man widely regarded as a pornographer had published a mock advertisement, according to which Falwell's "first time" was in an outhouse, and with his mother. There was a suit and a countersuit, and in the end the highest tribunal in the land, which

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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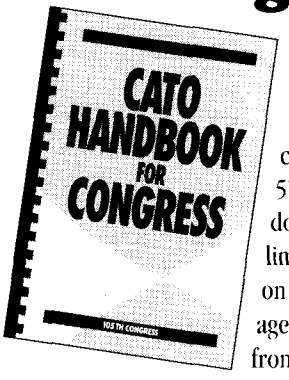

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could have ignored the case, found for Flynt.

The People vs. Larry Flynt is a resounding vindication of free speech in America, something that cannot be tested in a nonsubversive or inoffensive context. The Larry Flynt of the movie is funny and charming, but he is also brash and crude, and has incessant, indiscriminate sex. Moreover, he prides himself on publishing nothing like the "high-class" pornography of *Playboy*, where the girlie pictures are interspersed with articles on how to install quadraphonic stereo systems, and the like. His is a pornography for the common, nonaffluent man, with women's sexual organs closely scrutinized. In short, bare skin at the maximum, socially redeeming stuff at the barest minimum.

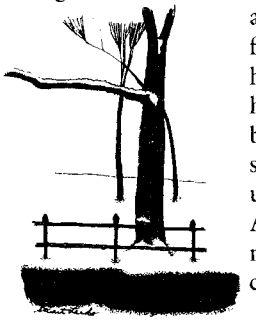
Whenever a real person is the protagonist of a major-studio biographical film, the presumption is that he or she is being celebrated.

But the film is also a love story, however odd. Running a sleazy nightclub and strip-joint in Cincinnati, Larry auditions a very young aspiring performer who calls herself Althea Leasure, and he takes a liking to her. Soon she is in his office for closer scrutiny; there is some sassy talk and, next, the two hit the sack. As Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski have written this scene, as Milos Forman directed it, and as Woody Harrelson and Courtney Love enact it, it is droll, whimsical, sexy, without a single shot a censor could object to. And that is how most of the film is: good dialogue and direction, idiomatic performances, and virtually no visible flesh. Only at the end do we see Althea nude, by which time she is dead, submerged in her bathtub: a blueish waxen doll, infinitely sad.

Larry lives with and, after a comic proposal scene, eventually marries Althea, who is bisexual; despite separate sexual agendas, they are rollickingly happy with each other. Things go bad only after someone who is never caught shoots Larry and his lawyer, and the publisher becomes paralyzed from the waist down. Larry, in continual pain, becomes dependent on drugs; Althea becomes a drug addict out of sexual deprivation, and eventually contracts AIDS. Her psychological and physiological deterioration is brilliantly conveyed without any dialogue, only through her ever more outlandish getups, her increasingly bizarre behavior, and her intensifying physical weakness. The decline is enormously moving.

This is also a film about publishing, with the various *Hustler* story conferences made riotously funny. For example, Althea suggests a nudie photo spread involving the *Wizard of Oz* characters, whose identities she has difficulties remembering. Though generally approved, her final, "there's Toto, maybe, even," elicits a shocked, "Some things are sacred." There is also a curious town meeting, and there are several hilarious trial scenes, one of them slightly marred when a dignified black judge, having had Flynt gagged, proposes taking "the gag off of you." Is this solecism the character's, the actor's, or the writers'?

This is a film, also, about the enduring and endearing, but not unruffled, friendship between Larry and Alan Isaacman, his lawyer. A film in which a lawyer is a highly sympathetic figure —especially as played by the talented and prepossessing Edward Norton—is somewhat of a curiosity right there. Ingeniously presented, too, is the friendship between Flynt and Ruth Carter Stapleton, Jimmy Carter's evangelist sister, played compellingly by Donna Hanover, Mayor Giuliani's wife. We are never allowed to figure out the exact nature of the nexus, girt as it is with riveting ambiguities. But Flynt's staff is mightily relieved when the boss finally announces, "The reign of Christian terror is over. We are porn again."



There is a splendid opening scene with little Larry and his even smaller brother making and selling moonshine; a wonderful prison visit by Althea to her jailed husband; and any number of fine throwaway bits, as when we cut from Larry's hope to "move somewhere where perverts are welcome," to helicopter shots of what looks like a dream city until the HOLLYWOOD sign betrays its problematic identity. There are various lagniappes: Larry's brother, Jimmy, is aptly portrayed by Woody's real-life brother, Brett Harrelson; James Carville appears as the prosecutor Simon Leis; Crispin Glover contributes a pungent bit as the one-eyed Arlo, a Flynt associate; Larry Flynt himself plays Flynt's most hostile judge.

Finally, though, this is a directorial triumph: the film has an infectiously brisk tempo, a savvy sense of alternating light and darkness (cinematographers don't come any better than Philippe Rousselot), and exemplary economy in telling its story. The scene of Isaacman arguing the case before the Supreme Court is dazzlingly staged, what with Edward Norton reminiscent of Jimmy Stewart in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, the actors portraying the Justices impeccably chosen, and some particularly awesome shots of them from behind, the backs of their majestic armchairs looming darkly like a mountain range at nightfall. Not even in his pre-Hollywood glory days in Prague did Forman do anything better.

■ There are also fictitious hustlers, one of whom is the hero of another, less good but not inconsiderable Hollywood movie, ***Jerry Maguire***—as it were, a Jerry for a Larry. Tom Cruise plays the sports-agent hero who, for a moment of reckless honesty, is dumped by both his agency and, eventually, his fiancée. Outmaneuvered by his former partners, he can hang onto only one client, a black wide receiver played superbly by the somewhat undersized Cuba Gooding Jr. Also leaving with him is a mousy secretary with a secret crush on him.

The story, written and directed by Cameron Crowe, develops along conventional lines and is overlong, what with several successive endings. But it features Cruise's best performance to date, a little sleaze suiting him better than his customary heroics. As the secretary who wins, drops, and recovers him, the newcomer Renée Zellweger is delightfully natural and vivacious, and other roles are also well taken. The dialogue, based on much research, sounds authentic, and the world of sports agents and players is novel and interesting. The movie has an adult feel to it, and that, for today's Hollywood, is quite a bit. □

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INTERVIEW

The Genoveses Find God

FREDERICA MATHEWES-GREEN

THEY have been called "the royal couple of radical academia." Eugene Genovese, a spunky Sicilian from Brooklyn, was captivated by the writings of Karl Marx while still in his teens. Through a long and distinguished career as an historian, he has used his biting wit and audacity to propound ideas that have given his more straitlaced colleagues palpitations.

His wife of 27 years, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, has followed a parallel path. A committed feminist, she helped launch the movement to treat women's experience as a valid field of study, and founded the Women's Studies Department at Emory University. At one point, the couple co-founded a magazine entitled *Marxist Perspectives*.

Perspectives change. In recent years they've shown up speaking at conservative events and writing for conservative magazines. The titles of Mrs. Fox-Genovese's two latest books, *Feminism without Illusions* and *"Feminism Is* Not *the Story of My Life,"* hint at growing skepticism about that movement's path. Mr. Genovese's latest collection of essays, *The Southern Front*, spends ample time skewering leftists. More recently, word filtered out of a religious conversion.

On a cool Atlanta evening the couple sit in their comfortably cluttered living room describing the evolution in their lives and thought. Mrs. Fox-Genovese is slim as a social X-ray, yet somehow produces a deep, droll voice *à la* Lauren Bacall. She has a deliberate manner and a faintly aristocratic bearing. On a gold chain she wears a chunky gold cross.

Her husband's swept-back whitening hair is approaching collar-length. He bristles with intensity, and is given to beginning sentences with the sharp Brooklynese interjection, "Look!"

Mrs. Fox-Genovese responds to an initial question about their recent changes with characteristic precision.

EFG: Anyone who knows me really well would tell you that my views have not changed. The world has changed.

FMG: What do you weigh most heavily in your life now?

EFG: Well, personally, there's no question that my faith takes priority. But family has always been a priority for me. My husband has always been the most important thing in my life, and I'm close to my family of origin. And I believe in that kind of stability.

FMG: You're a radical traditionalist.

EFG: I'm not. I don't have a radical bone in my body.

FMG: Is this true?

EG: On this question of "radical," the fact of the matter is Betsey never called herself a radical, and I don't think I did since the age of thirty. I called myself a Marxist. I turned thirty in 1960, and I had a very deep hostility to the cultural radicalism in the Sixties.

But you know, I think culturally Betsey and I always have been—I don't know if the word "conservative" is appropriate, but we've always been great respecters of tradition and the old ways and all that. Politically, it's a different matter. Betsey is viscerally politically moderate.

FMG: "Viscerally moderate"?

EG: I think that's fair, isn't it?

EFG: Yes. I care about social justice. That's why I'm Catholic, conservative, on the board of the Campaign for the American Family and a variety of other things. I'm not a country-club conservative.

FMG: You signed a pro-life statement [which appeared in the pages of NATIONAL REVIEW], and no doubt you would say that's because you care about social justice. Yet a lot of people would see that as a contradiction.

EFG: Uh-uh.

EG: I was *never* a political moderate.

FMG: You once said, "I'm in favor of discipline, repression, and order."

EG: I always have. I started my political life as a Stalinist.

FMG: You've mentioned that you now believe in God. How recent is that?

EG: It's in the last two years. You know, in *The Southern Front* I still spoke

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as an atheist; one reviewer said that I protest too much. When the book came off the press and I had to reread it, I started wrestling with the problem philosophically, and I lost.

In the meantime, Betsey was going through her process, and one day announced that she'd had a conversion. Now, she and I talk about religion a lot, but for about six months we hadn't. So we were doing it separately.

FMG: What was it that you resolved during this time?

EG: Look, on a philosophical level what I came to decide was that being an atheist involves as great a leap of faith as being a theist. Deep down I think I knew that; it was just my preferred leap of faith. But I was troubled by this even as an undergraduate, when I read *The Brothers Karamazov* and encountered

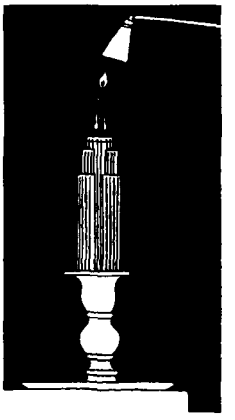
'A God of love who is not simultaneously a God of wrath doesn't interest me.'

Ivan's question: "If there is no God, is not everything permissible?" This weighed on me particularly with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Because, look, unlike a lot of people I hadn't pretended not to know what was happening. I may not have known the full horror of it until the Seventies, but I knew. The rationalization was that the political system was a disaster, but that the social system was basically sound and would prevail. What I used to refer to as "that byzantine political system" would be overcome. When it all collapsed, the question was, After seventy years, what do we have to show for it? Especially when it became clear that, even on a basic level, the system didn't deliver the goods, the one thing it was supposed to do. So what we had to show for it was tens of millions of corpses. And that brought me back to Ivan's question in a new way.

I would say that we may reject the Decalogue in the sense of not believing it's God's word, but we don't have anything to put in its place. And all historical experience should lead us to accept it on an as-if basis.

FMG: You've both claimed coming to believe in a God of the Decalogue, but Betsey has specified only herself as a Christian. Gene, have you not come to that point?

EG: As far as I'm concerned, the Sermon on the Mount is a fine-tuning of the Decalogue. I always took Jesus straight: "I have come to fulfill the law, not overthrow it." That in itself is not a problem for me. When he said, "Turn the other cheek," you know, I kinda wish—that, it seems to me, is pushing things a bit. But—OK.



FMG: Have you not joined the Church yet?

EG: I attend Mass every week, and I guess I consider myself a Catholic. But I have not yet—it's been fifty years since my last confession. There's something I gotta work through before I can do that. I will convert. I have no doubt about it. [Since this conversation, Mr. Genovese has in fact taken that step.]

FMG: You find Catholicism as attractive as any other brand, or preferable?

EG: I always said, if I could ever bring myself to believe in God, I'd go back to the Catholic Church. Curiously, I've read much more Protestant theology than I have Catholic, at least twentieth-century stuff, but I'm much more comfortable with Catholic theology. It strikes me as being eminently more sensible, if it is a good deal more messy. I have tremendous admiration for Karl Barth and for the orthodox Reformed theologians, but I do think they get into dialectical traps that are hopeless. It seems to me that the way in which the Catholic Church approaches things is right; in the end you do have to accept that certain things must remain a mystery, and if you can't do that you're going to reason yourself into hopeless situations.

FMG: You've written some amusing things making fun of liberal theologians, who present a God whom you say you like because you get to see him in the mirror every morning.

EG: I have to say, a God who is progressing, learning from his creatures, is not somebody who interests me. If I have something to teach God, I don't need him any more. A God of love who is not simultaneously a God of wrath doesn't interest me either.

FMG: Betsey, when were you received into the Church?

EFG: On December 9, 1995, the day after the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. I was baptized and had everything all at once, five sacraments in one day.

FMG: In discussing developments in the black-studies and women's-studies movements, you have criticized the concept that "The personal is political."

EG: It's a fascist and a Stalinist slogan.

FMG: But people do make political decisions based on their experiences.

EG: In one sense, it's open to common sense that everything we do has political significance. The problem is when you raise that to a doctrine that politicizes all aspects of life, and that's what the slogan does. I'm not really kidding when I say that it's fascist and Stalinist.

FMG: Is this, in a way, similar to becoming a committed Catholic? The Church will require you to fast and go to confession, it will get involved in your life in many intimate ways. The further you advance, the more you find every area of your life infused with spiritual concerns. Would you say this is a genuine spiritual hunger, which "the personal is political" fills instead with politics?

EG: I'll buy that, but what you're telling me is that the formulation is that of a Christian heresy. I can live with that, but it doesn't warm my heart.

EFG: But I think it's worse than that. I'd say it was a Christian heresy if it weren't the absolute reversal of Christianity. It's ultimately the deification of self. The-personal-as-political ends up giving us bisexuality as a protected category. I am quite prepared to believe that some people are gay and lesbian by nature, but bisexuality is just ensconcing terminal adolescence as a social norm. It makes faithlessness into a higher good, and demands protection for it.

FMG: Does faith lead us to a "totalized" life that is self-sacrificing and embracing of community, while "the personal is political" leads to an individualism that pits people against each other in a struggle for so-called rights?

EG: They would argue the opposite, however. They would argue that it is precisely in the politicization of the personal that you have grounds for reconciliation. I've always loved the feminist

Mrs. Mathewes-Green's spiritual memoir, Facing East *(HarperSanFrancisco), has just been published.*

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slogan that their movement liberates men as well as women. In a certain sense it's true.

EFG: It sure does. Look at all those fatherless children.

FMG: Anything you'd like to say about your changing position on abortion?

EFG: Everything I've written on abortion has said that the language of rights was all wrong and impoverished. I have always said that a woman doesn't have a right to her body. I have always said that an abortion concerns the father as much as the mother. I have always said the primary concern should be the sanctity of life. Where I have changed is at the margin in whether we can trust society to grow that kind of moral law, to reach that kind of moral consensus, for political health. It's what Bill Bennett has said: that people who are pro-life could live with the availability of the choice to have an abortion until the three months, if it was acknowledged that beyond that it was out, period. I think that position is a blend of faith and political practicality.

FMG: Gene, I noticed a couple of times in *The Southern Front* you said you were finding that people on the Right tended to be courteous to you even when they disagreed with you, but your own allies you found surprisingly capable of being vicious.

EG: Well, look, this is nothing new. But I'll tell you, these people who have come out of the Left since the 1960s are like nothing I've ever seen. The people in the Communist movement could be pretty rough, but they very rarely resorted to personal filth. They were too political for that. It was, "Hey, what's the difference whether he's a nice guy or he's not a nice guy. We have a political movement." But these people have no politics, see. They have degenerated to the point that it's all a façade for their personal advancement and what they call self-expression.

EUGENE Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese have been two of the most challenging and influential voices in the academic world over the last several decades. As they proceed to question left-wing dogmas and break new ground, will their honesty be respected? Not likely; traitors are more likely to be shot on sight. □

NEW YORK JOURNAL

St. John the Unfinished

DANIEL A. KAUFMAN

FROM the choir stalls, the central aisle of the nave of New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine stretches out in an endless line, through the throngs of dignitaries and worshippers and past the bays commemorating, among other things, Education, Medicine, and Anglican History. At the nave's west end stands the great Christmas tree, its tip pointing toward the lesser rose window. From there my eyes come to rest on the great rose window, on Christ in His Majesty. The organ pipes swell with the Invitatory, and voices fill the air with song as the procession of bishop, priests, lay ministers, and choir makes its way through the haze of sweet smoke that fills the vast space of the nave as the thurible swings and the incense burns.

Tonight is not just another Midnight Mass in one of the world's largest, most striking cathedrals, but the beginning of a week of farewell on the retirement of the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, Dean of the Cathedral. And Dean Morton is not just another distinguished clergyman: in the quarter-century that he has served St. John's he has come to personify the institution and what it stands for. To some, he is one of the city's great clerical champions of liberal causes. To others, he represents everything that has gone wrong with the Episcopal Church.

James Morton was appointed dean of St. John's in 1972, by his old friend and mentor Bishop Paul Moore Jr., a leader of the liberal wing of the Episcopal Church (Paul Moore is the same bishop who in 1977 ordained the Episcopal Church's first announced homosexual priest).

When the new dean arrived at St. John's, he found a relatively conservative place, at least architecturally speaking. Construction at the site on Morningside Heights had begun in 1892 in the Romanesque style, the crossing and east end going up first. When work on the nave was started in 1911, it was decided to switch to the Gothic style. The vault at the east end had to be entirely redone to preserve aesthetic coherence. Some building went on sporadically through World War I and the Depression, with the nave finally dedicated in 1941. From that point until James Morton's deanship, the cathedral stood with its transepts and west front towers yet to be built and the crossing unfinished. Building has resumed, but completion of the cathedral remains only slightly less difficult to imagine than the coming of the End of Days. The place is still familiarly known as St. John the Unfinished.

To some, Dean Morton represents everything that has gone wrong with the Episcopal Church.

The procession reaches the high altar, flanked on either side by towering gold menorahs, whose presence in this *sanctum sanctorum* recalls the great Temple at Jerusalem. Gargoyles peer down on the scene from the tops of eight massive columns surrounding the altar like a crown. At the center is the great cross, whose Christ Triumphant completes the Romanesque aesthetic of the sanctuary, in stirring contrast with the cathedral's Gothic nave and west end and its towering Christ Crucified.

The Sunday after Christmas I return and stand in the Chapel of St. Martin of Tours, facing the statue of Joan of Arc. The stone beneath her feet was brought from the Rouen cell that was her prison. Today was James Morton's final sermon as dean, in which he recalled his long history with the cathedral.

The dualism of flesh and Logos domi-

Mr. Kaufman teaches philosophy and the humanities at the City University of New York.

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nated his words, which is fitting. God, Christians believe, made the Word flesh through Christ, and through community works, said Dean Morton, the priest must make flesh what he preaches. We see this in the cathedral's commitment to public service, in its soup kitchen, homeless shelter, and housing-refurbishment project, as well as in its more original ventures. In 1979, Dean Morton pioneered the Cathedral Stoneworks Project, an impressive program in which inner-city youths were trained in traditional stone-cutting and carving; they continued the work on the cathedral that had been stalled, and acquired a craft that would serve them throughout their lives.

As with any Platonist scheme, however, taking the Word—the ideals of tradition—and turning it into solid reality in the present-day world is difficult. The world is currently very far from the Word, and the influence of current trends may undermine both Word and tradition. That, some would say, is what has happened at St. John's.

The "Hair Mass" of 1972, commemorating the third anniversary of the Broadway musical and featuring rock 'n' roll and women in hot pants, comes to mind. So do the dean's attempts to complete the cathedral. When he held contests to solicit designs from contemporary architects, most of the designs that came in were abominations. One calls for an Eiffel Tower–like structure to straddle the cathedral; another would turn the vault and crossing into a greenhouse. The latter is favored by Dean Morton, who has been an environmentalist since the Sixties, when he was perhaps too greatly impressed by photographs of the earth from space.

If the predominant philosophy of St. John's is the intersection of Word and flesh, its sensibility under Dean Morton has been universalist. In his sermon the dean spoke of how the Word has been realized in many "fleshes"—the classic universalist proposition that all the world's religions and cultures express essentially the same philosophy. This idea was presented most stirringly in Pico's "Oration on the Dignity of Man," but Pico's imagination stretched no further from Christendom than the Greek, Jewish, and Persian traditions, and his vision was part of the glorious humanist revival that lay at the center of the Italian Renaissance. In today's environment, when we face cultural impoverishment and chaos at home and evil, sadistic regimes and cultures abroad, such universalism seems like empty diversity-speak.

As I sit, facing St. Joan, I think of how she stood to defend France from the English incursions, and hope that the cathedral's next steward will be committed to protecting its tradition and the Word from the world's foolishness.

Two days later, December 31, marks the end of Dean Morton's tenure, and I attend the Fourteenth Annual New Year's Eve Concert for Peace. The cathedral has a festive, concert-hall air; it is barely illuminated, save for the spotlight which falls on the Brooklyn Philharmonic as it plays the *Gloria* from Schubert's Mass in G Major.

It is hard not to be impressed with this institution. I have been in cathedrals with a purer aesthetic and a stronger religious sensibility, but never was there such a marvelously eclectic place, where Gothic and Romanesque merge so sublimely and where high art and music, community service and religion, come so intimately together. While the Dean's ideology is far too "progressive," his cathedral stands firmly in the tradition of its medieval progenitors—at the center of its community and its culture.

So, in the wake of the "Hallelujah Chorus" and Philippe Petit's high-wire walk across the nave, as the cathedral begins to come alive with the light of thousands of candles, lit to the strains of "This Little Light of Mine," the question that dominates my mind is: Will St. John's lead that community in a moral, Christian direction, or will it be led by the currents of the times? □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

A Time to Be Born, by Bonnie Shullenberger (Cowley Publications, 108 pp., paperback, $9.95)

I WAS asked to review this book for an Episcopal pro-life publication, and having done so I felt moved to bring it to the attention of *NR*'s wider audience as well. Whenever a book delves as deeply as this one does into painful areas of its author's life, the reader is likely to wonder: Ought this book to have been published? The answer, in this case, is definitely, Yes. For the author is perfectly placed to answer the pro-choicer's challenge: You have no right to criticize a woman's decision to have an abortion; you have no idea what she's going through. Bonnie Shullenberger can answer: Oh yes I do. I know what it's like to be a frightened teenaged girl whose boyfriend wants her to have an abortion. I know what it's like to be a 39-year-old woman whose life another pregnancy would totally disrupt. And I also know how devastating it is to give a child up for adoption. But *A Time to Be Born* is not purely narrative; there is much serious reflection on how babies, both before they are born and after, fit into the "web of life," and on what the Church should be doing to "form Christians." The author also tells how she came to believe that women could be validly ordained, and how she came to seek ordination herself. For some of our readers, that may make her book unacceptable. For those for whom it does not, *A Time to Be Born* is an extraordinarily powerful account, both spiritually and intellectually.

—Linda Bridges

Dewey Defeats Truman, by Thomas Mallon (Pantheon, 355 pp., $24)

AS IN his previous book, *Henry and Clara*, Thomas Mallon manages to make events of the past seem very much alive. Like its predecessor, *Dewey Defeats Truman* is not just another historical novel. Mallon's gift for illuminating history with fiction brings us the love triangle of Anne Macmurray and her two suitors in Dewey's hometown of Owosso, Michigan, in the months before the famous headline is stunningly proved false. Though we know who wins the 1948 election, it is impossible not to share the excitement of the people of Owosso in the days right before their "sure-thing" fame. It is equally hard not to share in Anne's soul-searching over which suitor is the one for her, and, since here we do not know the outcome, we are in for a surprise. Mallon's characters create a wistful longing for a time, perhaps more innocent than ours, that seems very far away.

—Karina Rollins

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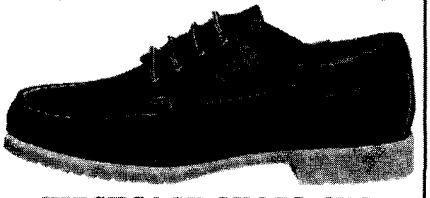
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KARATNYCKY

(Continued from page 42)

one-tenth that of Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the other former Soviet republics. A conflict between Ukraine and Russia, for example, could cut off the flow of gas and oil to Western and Central Europe. Finally, there is Russia's military–industrial potential. Were Russia to reconstitute a military–political union with the former Soviet republics, that alliance today would have a GNP roughly a third that of the European Union. Assuming that market reform will eventually propel high growth rates, a flow of foreign capital into an emerging Russian market, and significant technology transfers, it is not difficult to posit a resurgent Russia exerting growing influence on the life of Europe in the next century.

What, then, should the United States do? Neither the Clinton Administration nor congressional Republicans have struck the proper balance. The Administration still invokes a mantra of cooperation and partnership with "democratic Russia," even as Russia's leaders threaten its neighbors. Republicans, especially isolationists, have conveniently written off Russia as a lost cause unworthy of further U.S. aid.

However, the litany of alternately depressing and encouraging news suggests that the Russian future will be determined by three factors: how deep the democratic transformation goes, the extent to which a genuine free-market economy emerges, and whether the imperial temptation is rejected or embraced. In this context, Republicans should not block aid to Russia; instead, they should insist that it be used to advance the growth of a democratic, free-market, non-imperial Russia and they should work to ensure the delivery of that aid to those in Russian life who share our values.

For while the Russian elite is wedded to neo-imperial sentiments, there are some hopeful signs that the Russian people are not. Recent polls show that ordinary Russians are not fearful of an expanding NATO. Moreover, Russians appear to have warmed to their newfound freedoms and embraced their limited democracy.

On the question of empire, too, polling data offer signs of hope. The Russian people are disgusted at the immense number of lives lost in the senseless war in Chechnya. The high level of trust placed in Aleksandr Lebed is in part due to his efforts to try to bring that conflict to an end. Polls show that Russians remain nostalgic about the global power wielded by the USSR, but they are unwilling to pay the price in blood or treasure to restore it.

Above all, the new generation of emerging Russian leaders appears to be growing more pro-Western in its cultural, economic, and political preferences. It is these twenty- and thirty-somethings who will take political power and assume leadership posts early in the twenty-first century, when a more prosperous and powerful Russia may emerge. U.S. policy should be oriented toward influencing these future leaders. □

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TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner

1 A	2 V	■	3 V	4 E	5 O	6 D	7 U	8 M	■	9 A	10 D	■	11 A	12 N	■	13 C	14 R	15 K	■	16 V		
17 C	■	18 U	19 Q	20 P	21 K	22 R	■	23 K	24 T	■	25 K	26 U	27 A	■	28 K	29 A	30 N	31 S	32 C	33 B		
34 U	35 R	36 A	■	37 P	38 H	39 L	40 J	■	41 F	42 W	43 Q	44 V	45 I	46 K	47 U	48 P	■	49 Q	50 C	51 K		
■	52 S	53 M	54 O	55 K	56 F	■	57 Q	58 L	59 U	60 K	61 E	62 H	63 M	64 A	■	65 A	66 U	67 P	68 M	■		
69 Q	■	70 K	71 R	72 U	73 C	74 S	75 O	76 P	77 F	78 N	79 G	■	80 N	81 F	■	82 S	83 P	84 H	85 F	86 K		
87 J	88 Q	89 L	90 D	■	91 R	92 U	■	93 N	94 F	95 W	■	96 M	97 A	98 F	99 I	100 K	101 C	■	102 O	103 D		
104 U	■	105 M	106 P	107 U	■	108 B	109 J	110 D	111 T	112 U	113 V	114 R	115 P	116 H	■	117 T	118 F	■	119 N	120M		
121 L	■	122 K	123 E	124 U	■	125 P	126 L	127 O	128 T	129 C	130 U	■	131 H	132 K	■	133 L	134 D	135 C	■	136 D		
137 K	138 L	139 O	■	140 Q	141 V	■	142 V	143 Q	144 M	145 R	146 L	147 S	148 B	149 G	■	150 J	151 A	152 B	■	153 O		
154W	155 U	■	156 G	157 O	158 S	159 V	160 P	161 I	162 L	163 F	164 K	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		

DEFINITIONS

A. What some would require of federal judges (2 words) — 27 1 97 65 9 36 11 29 64 151

B. Evils — 148 108 33 152

C. Neon or radon, for instance (2 words) — 50 135 32 129 73 101 13 17

D. Dallas gridiron pros — 6 134 136 110 103 90 10

E. Acknowledge, have — 4 123 61

F. Vitality (hyph.) — 56 41 118 77 81 94 98 163 85

G. Gross less expenses — 149 156 79

H. Selected — 84 38 131 116 62

I. Wade's opponent — 45 99 161

J. Osiris's sister/wife — 109 40 150 87

K. Early Danish existentialist (2 words) — 86 122 132 137 100 60 23 164 21 15 46 / 70 55 25 28 51

L. Without a valid will — 39 162 89 58 121 146 138 133 126

M. Democracy's tyrants — 8 68 53 105 144 96 120 63

N. Right of purchase or sale at set terms — 80 30 93 119 12 78

O. Bankrobber's Everest? (2 words) — 102 153 5 54 139 75 127 157

P. In which Miranda discovers the "brave new world" of men (2 words) — 48 106 115 37 83 76 125 20 67 160

Q. Father of the Iroquois League — 43 88 49 57 69 140 19 143

R. Illiteracy, Oakland style — 22 91 71 145 114 35 14

S. Labor picketer's cry — 31 82 52 147 158 74

T. Smug negation — 24 117 128 111

U. Federal "Service" which menaces us each April (2 words) — 34 124 18 92 104 155 59 26 112 107 72 / 130 47 66 7

V. Frequently (poet.) — 141 3 2 113 16 142 44 159

W. Patricia Ireland's gals — 42 95 154

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. FLORENCE KING: *The Graves of Academe*: "The end result has been not enlightenment but a sly freemasonry among college graduates that assumes we all hold 'correct' political opinions, which effectively discourages any frank discussion of the problems that our education supposedly equips us to solve."

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Squabbling On the Right

NEW YORK, JANUARY 28

If seniority were binding, the new chairman of the Senate's Immigration Subcommittee would be Jon Kyl of Arizona, who however turned it down, ceding to Spencer Abraham of Michigan. Why did Mr. Kyl turn it down? Because Arizona has a very long, porous border with Mexico, and the Hispanic vote in the state is correspondingly weighty. Senator Abraham is from far-off Michigan, and whatever he says about immigration will be unnoticeable at the polls unless Michigan annexes Ontario. Meanwhile, Senator Abraham is fleetingly a hero of the full-house immigration lobby (the more immigrants, the merrier).

The splendid Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal* has got a bit of this free-market-on-immigration bug, and in celebrating the turn of events in the Senate, he parlayed a couple of eye-catching illustrations of his point into grand immigration-policy postulates.

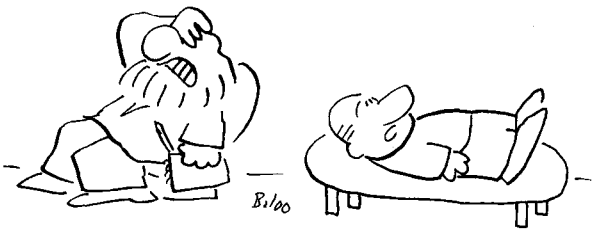
He tells us that at Cypress Semiconductor, a Silicon Valley princedom, he learned that 40 per cent of Cypress's top management is foreign born. If the reader thought this an isolated phenomenon, hang on, Mr. Gigot is just warming up: we are advised that more than 40 per cent of U.S. engineering PhDs are foreign born.

Goodness! On the other hand, if 40 per cent of U.S. engineers are foreign born, why should we be surprised that Cypress's top management is 40 per cent foreign born? Surely the arresting disclosure here is how (apparently) few Americans are trained to build advanced-degree bridges. Why is that? Where else is America professionally laggard? Do we need immigrants to teach us ecology? To occupy posts as police chiefs? Senators? Editors? Columnists?

The Ellis Island cultists resist plainspoken reasoning. 1) The United States is greatly desired as a homeland by millions of people whose countries are less free, and where opportunity is less bright. 2) The idea of totally open borders—anybody who wants to can come on in—is the stuff of libertarian fancy, nice for tone poems by such as Ayn Rand, but not very good national policy. 3) At various points in history we have opened, and then gently closed, our borders, pending economic and social assimilation. If there is dogged unemployment, there is no manifest need for more labor. If pockets of immigrants are resisting the assimilation that over generations has been the solvent for American citizenship, then energies should go to accosting multiculturalism, rather than encouraging its increase. And, 4) intelligent immigration policy obviously authorizes one more Einstein for Cypress Semiconductor and one fewer welfare immigrant simply because he is second cousin to the second cousin of the uncle who got in last week.

The free-market purists spend very little time worrying about illegal immigration, in part because they don't think any immigration should be illegal, a commitment that lightens their thinking lives, but at some cost to brainpower. Mr. Gigot criticizes the editors of NATIONAL REVIEW for calling for immigration reform and declares that any such move disrespects the program and the mystique of Ronald Reagan, the great optimist. Ronald Reagan in 1981 backed severe punishment for Americans who hired illegal aliens. And in 1986, he signed a bill granting amnesty to illegal aliens but imposing fines to discourage further illegal immigration.

There is a case to be made for reducing legal immigration pending some rectification of the multiculturalism problem. But that in turn is difficult to face because such reforms as English-only become a political hassle. And it really discourages intelligent discourse to inject into the conversation such objections as, Would you have opposed giving a visa to Albert Einstein? And then there is the primary question: Do we or do we not have the right to regulate passage over our own borders? If the answer is in the affirmative, then regulated immigration is nothing more than parsing the rights of a sovereign state. It isn't that the *Wall Street Journal* libertarians are saying that there is no point in trying to enforce unenforceable laws—they are all in favor of continuing to put a marijuana smoker in jail. A pity that they can't iron out this wrinkle in their otherwise lily-pure complexion. □



"But then I ask myself: Do I deserve *high self-esteem?"*

Jewish Opposition To Vouchers

NEW YORK, JANUARY 17

The question before the house was: Account for the opposition by Jewish American voters to school vouchers and prayer in the public schools.

Well, one respondent proffered, why should there be any surprise about that? The Jewish vote is preponderantly liberal and Democratic and has been since the New Deal and the interventionist foreign policy of FDR. The liberal position on public policy is, so to speak, a syndrome: liberals believe in a cluster of things—government action, the right to abort, redistribution of income, separation of church and state. Why should there be any surprise?

The generality tends to be correct, but the extreme position on church/state provokes curiosity as to its origin. It is not associated with any policies bequeathed us by FDR. The strict construction of the First Amendment was a creature of the Supreme Court beginning with its decision, in 1948, that release time in public schools for religious education violates the First Amendment's establishment clause. The questioner asked: Is the Jewish population genuinely afraid that a relaxation of the iron wall of separation might produce a theocratic Christian society? Or is it a form of rebuke, aimed at historical memories of persecution? Another point: Inasmuch as evidence abounds that the public schools in such places as New York City, urban New Jersey, and Washington, D.C., are producing a generation of illiterates, isn't the Jewish community's traditional championship of educational ideals in apparent contradiction with its position on vouchers? No ethnic group was ever more certain than the Jews that education is the key to advancement. Why then do

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they tend to discourage efforts against illiteracy, simply because those efforts mean that some black students will be sent by their parents to Catholic schools?

One voice was to the effect that among elderly Jews—"over 50, 55"—there is an old hostility to Catholicism. "They don't worry about the Protestants, since most of them are wimpy about religion." Another said that the fight particularly in New York is led by the teachers' unions, "which are predominantly Jewish" and are said to fear any reallocation of resources that might undermine the emphasis on the public schools. Another pointed to the highly successful exurban schools. "People who live in Greenwich are not enthusiastic about a break-up of a system that would dilute the excellence of the free education their children are getting in their public schools."

Two polls done during the election season catch the eye. The first surveys Jewish sentiment in Minneapolis and St. Paul, whose 45,000 Jews constitute 90 per cent of the Jewish population of Minnesota. There, 80 per cent believe that anti-Semitism is still a major problem and continue, in the language of the *Star Tribune*, "to strongly support public schools and oppose the use of school vouchers."

The other poll was done in Indianapolis and is especially surprising given that the language of the polling organization, the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council, was very clearly tilted to evoke liberal responses to the questions asked. Even so, according to the *Indianapolis Star*, only 29 per cent of respondents described themselves as "liberal." Less than one-half (42 per cent) called themselves Democrats. The paper comments, "That more than two-thirds of the Indianapolis Jewish community no longer feel comfortable identifying themselves with the political tradition that has defined American Jewish life since the New Deal can only be called a dramatic shift."

Most surprising, in the Indianapolis poll, more than one-half (52 per cent) of respondents said they do not object to public religious displays. One-third support "moment of silence" legislation for public schools, and one-third support private-school vouchers.

It is odd to think of Indianapolis as a trendsetter. But the only other way to think of it is as so reactionary as not yet to have caught up with FDR and the Warren Court. Such a charge is not convincingly leveled. It has to be that there is movement, and curiosity asks: Why? What are its causes? And why is not the movement greater, given the Jewish acuity on the matter of educational advantage, and Jewish precision in weighing failed experiments? To which, of course, one adds the obvious, namely that affirmative-action programs, which are associated with liberal policies, tend to victimize young men and women who include Jewish candidates for higher education. Meanwhile, it's nice to think of Indiana as an avant-garde state. □

Illiteracy Abroad

NEW YORK, JANUARY 24

The conversation turned to the pledge by Mr. Clinton, in the closing days of the presidential campaign, to "abolish" illiteracy. The question was put to James Jackson Kilpatrick, the columnist and author of *The Writer's Art*, how such a goal could be accomplished, and he gave the wisest possible answer: It can't be. John Simon, the illustrious drama and film critic, contributed a solid dose of pessimism, concluding that not enough teachers are themselves literate enough to elevate literacy to anything like a national goal. "To what extent does journalism figure in the problem?" was the next question.

Yes, the number of people who get their news from daily papers is greatly reduced. Which means they get it from radio and from television. It is not necessary to know how to read in order to view and to hear, as we all know. But then the question arose: Are newspapers sufficiently challenging? Is there such a thing as a flame that ignites a desire for literacy, and if so, is it lit in newspapers?

Here there was a diversity of opinion. Mr. Kilpatrick, notwithstanding that he is an eminent verbal craftsman, takes the rigid position that the only role of journalism is to communicate and that therefore anything that makes communication more difficult encumbers the mission of the journal. Specifically, he had it in mind to condemn the use of unusual words, and his target ("my affectionate target") was the host of the program: me.

The defense posted his Articles of Defiance, arguing as follows:

a) A word that exactly conveys the meaning the journalist wishes to capture should no more be rejected because it is unusual than the chord the musician strikes, intending a particular effect. Mr. Simon joined in, giving the analogy of a painter: "You don't tell the painter he is at liberty to use any of three shades of blue. He uses just the blue he wants."

b) Newspapers are obviously obliged to communicate essential news by conventional means. But not all that a newspaper does is utilitarian. Newspapers carry columns and features and, indeed, cartoons and comic strips, whose design is to educate, tantalize, amuse, entertain. "When writing instructions on how to administer the medicine after a rattlesnake has bitten you, it is overwhelmingly important to write those instructions in John–Jane–Gyp prose," I conceded. But when, say, reviewing a movie, or analyzing a political speech, one is reasonably allowed greater license. If in exercising that license the journalist uses words that are unusual, Mr. Simon says, he may indeed run the risk of failing to communicate to 90 per cent of the readers, but he is providing service of some kind to 10 per cent of the readers, and why should they be ignored? Aren't they too entitled to find satisfactions in corners of journals that give a half-dozen pages over to sports news, another half-dozen to financial markets?

How do you account for the professional success of *Time* magazine? (Mr. Kilpatrick's intended victim was now thoroughly aroused.) In the current issue, on a single page, one runs into the word, and words, "Sprach." And "discontinuous moment"; "rallentando" and "senescence"; a "Zarathustra crescendo"; "balm in chiliad"; "time's odometer." James Jackson Kilpatrick, Southern bard, knew like the cut of baling wire in his hands what it must have felt like at Appomattox.

Later in the day one heard about the great rush to Shakespeare in Hollywood and elsewhere. Ten movies in a period of just over one year. How does one account for this, in a society increasingly illiterate? Charlton Heston was asked the question and gave the tantalizing answer that Shakespeare elicits variations in thought and mood and emotion that catalyze a fascination with the words he used to record that variety. Mortimer Adler, the great pedagogue, has argued endlessly that successful teaching requires exposure of the student to the very best that can be given at any age level. "Maybe they'll drink only a few ounces of the best wine, but you must always serve the best wine."

Obviously it's not going to happen to everybody that if you expose them simultaneously to Ebonics and to Shakespeare they'll ditch Spike Lee for Hamlet. But it has to be true that illiteracy is other than a genetic condition and that therefore the tinder must be lit that then lights up that great darkness which is the blinding fate of the illiterate. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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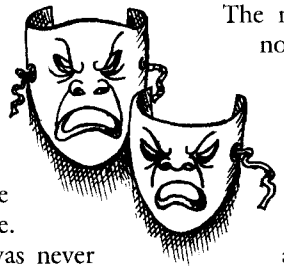
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

EVERYONE of a certain age is familiar with the phrase "nice people." Not just the words, but the tune; the myriad layers of meaning and innuendo, the trenchant pauses, vocal inflections, and quirked eyebrows that flesh it out. It's our original code word and our only natural one, predating today's awkward euphemisms by many decades, which is why you must be of a certain age to appreciate it.

The Cult of Nice People was the means by which Americans of an earlier time assessed the "civility" so avidly sought and interminably discussed by Americans of the present day. The niceness it involved bore no resemblance to the niceness of Nice Guys; still less to the spastic niceness of "compassion," "sensitivity," and "reaching out." Based on what psychology calls "consciousness of kind," it was a finicky, rejecting niceness activated by an early-warning system of mental bells and whistles that went off whenever the need to be judgmental arose.



I should stress that it was never tied to the "American standard of living." Nice People did not necessarily have a three-car garage—or even a garage. I know this for a fact because I was born into the most dedicated fifth column of Nice People ever to undermine America's egalitarian ideal: the pre–World War II shabby-genteel class, urban division, who lived in rented apartments.

Nice Peopling may have made the rich exclusive and the middle class snobbish, but it gave the shabby genteel a means of self-respect that is now illegal: the right to identify and discriminate against the shabby uncouth.

Today, if I close my eyes and concentrate, I can hear the words as they must have sounded to me as I lay in my crib: *nispeepul*. I think of it as my primal sound. Most children raised in crowded apartments hear their parents making love, but I probably heard late-night discussions about nispeepul.

I certainly heard plenty in the daytime. "The new tenants in 2B are nice people. . . . I just saw that couple down the hall and they aren't nice people." I remember our door opened on the crack as my grandmother, a human radar gun, peered out at our neighbors' visitors to assess the cut of their jib. "Their friends aren't nice people," she ruled. A month later they proved her right by having a free-for-all, so we moved. Before we vacated, she and my mother, normally the most indifferent of housekeepers, spent the final days scrubbing the old place "so the landlord will know that nice people lived here." Nothing in our apartments became us like the leaving of them.

The niceness of Nice People was not strained. It consisted of a few simple standards such as being quiet and clean, and an idiosyncratic standard called "having things nice." This varied according to individual taste and temperament, but basically it meant going to a little extra trouble for little extra niceties: cloth napkins instead of paper, for example. Another idiosyncrasy, not to be confused with "having things nice," was "having one nice thing." This referred to the Cinderella piece that survives the most straitened circumstances. Our dishes were chipped and mismatched but we had sterling; the Nice People upstairs had a piano but no rugs.

Nice People in really dire straits often cultivated a comforting eccentricity, like the poor but proud Nolans in *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Francie Nolan hates coffee but her mother, Katie, gives her a cup at every meal so that the child can enjoy pouring it down the sink afterwards. When Katie's shocked sister protests, Katie replies: "I think it's good that people like us can waste something once in a while." Thanks to her mother's shrewd psychology, Francie feels a notch above her real station and thus never succumbs to the hopelessness that goes with grinding poverty.

The eccentricities I cultivated during my years of writer's poverty illustrate Nice Peopling carried to the *n*th degree. Loath to buy booze in half-pint bottles, I always splurged on several fifths at a time, and labeled my scabrous mail box with a raised-engraving calling card to stand out from my neighbors, who penciled their names on Band-Aids, telling myself that if the police came they would know at once who was *not* drunk and disorderly.

Today Nice Peopling is practiced chiefly by the government, which has expanded the "regardless of" list to include citizenship status, language preference, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, parenting status, animal-companion preference, and previous or ongoing condition of communicable disease. Being choosy now means renting to the stateless lesbian with TB instead of the Marxist pedophile with the boa constrictor.

WHAT private-sector Nice Peopling still exists is practiced by those scourges of Republican country clubs, the liberal media. Yuppie pundits toss off casual references to the "born loser," their only unabashed acknowledgment of congenital traits. *Time* has a weekly elite–prole test: maps of the U.S. with differently colored areas showing the degree of popularity of various trends or practices. My favorite is "People Who Eat Hostess Twinkies," featuring a chocolatey South and a white, Twinkie-free Northeastern urban corridor.

Their worst offense has been the Nice-Peopling of Paula Jones as "trailer-park trash." They've since apologized, but they could have saved themselves a lot of trouble if they had consulted me in the first place. I could have told them what every liberal should know.

I knew a Paula Jones in high school. We called her the "Too Girl": too much makeup, too much perfume, etc. One day our homeroom teacher asked someone to take the flag home and wash it, and the Too Girl volunteered. The next day she struggled in sideways with what looked like a sheet of plywood. She had starched the flag. It stuck straight out from the pole.

As we laughed, a hurt look crossed her face. Then she lifted her chin proudly and said, "I did it because I wanted to make it nice." □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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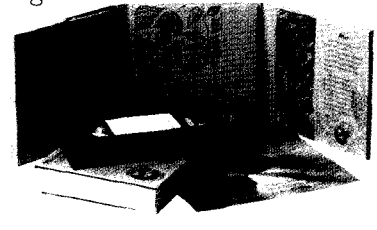

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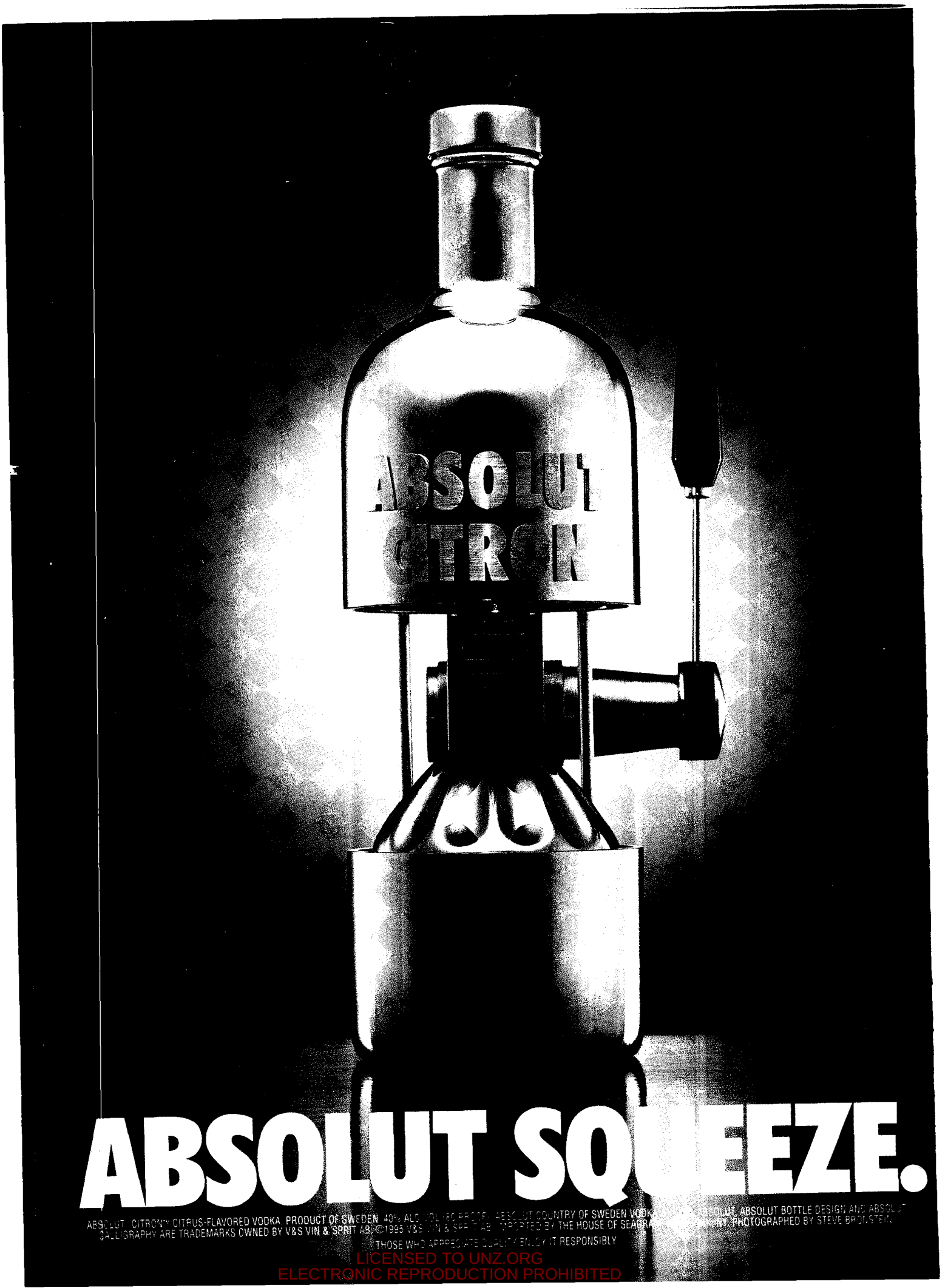

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